FOREIGN
BROADCAST
INFORMATION
SERVICE

Daily Report

Latin America

FBIS-LAT-94-039
Monday
28 February 1994

Daily Report
Latin America

FBIS-LAT-94-039 CONTENTS *28 February 1994*

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.
An Ω indicates a Foreign Media Note.

INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

Parlacen Decries U.S. Plan To Charge Asylum-Seekers *[NOTIMEX]* 1
Central American Economy Ministers Meet, Review NAFTA *[NOTIMEX]* 1

CARIBBEAN

Cuba

Foreign Ministry Issues Statement on Hebron Massacre *[Havana TV]* 2
Fidel Castro Receives Cypriot Delegation *[Havana Radio]* 2
Further Remarks by Fidel Castro on Rebelde's Anniversary *[Havana Radio]* 2
U.S. Support for Rangel Bill Increases *[Havana Radio]* 3
Robaina Stresses Strengthening Relations With Exiles *[Havana Radio]* 3
GRANMA Says Cuban Immigrants Reject U.S. Blockade *[Havana Radio]* 3
Alpha-66 Reportedly Blocking Tourism *[Havana Radio]* 4
Colombia To Sell 20,000 Barrels of Crude Oil Daily *[Havana Radio]* 4
    Supply of Petroleum 'Confirmed' *[Havana Radio]* 4
    Sales To Commence in Jul *[Havana Radio]* 5
FAR Shares Maintenance Expertise in Workshops *[Cuba Vision Network 26 Feb]* 5
Beijing Invites Cuban Business Participation *[Havana Radio]* 6
Jose Luis Rodriguez Discusses Measures With Economists *[Havana TV]* 6
Information Science Cooperation With Spain Increases *[Havana Radio]* 6
Roundup of Economic Activity *[Havana Radio, TV]* 6
Health Cooperation Agreement Signed With Colombia *[Havana Radio]* 7
Education Minister on Quality of Teachers, System *[Madrid EFE]* 7

Haiti

Groups Reproach Clinton for 'Indifference' *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 8
Joseph Delivers Plan to Aristide; Paul Calls for Unity *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 8
ACP, SG Parliamentarians Oppose Aristide Counterproposal *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 8
Sansaricq Advocates New Ad Hoc Government *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 9
Police Arrest Reported Cali Cartel Drug Networkers *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 9
Ten Kg Cocaine Seized at Airport, Priestess Arrested *[Port-au-Prince Radio]* 10
Correction to MOP Supports Aristide Plan 10

MEXICO

Marcos Reiterates Demand for Government's Resignation *[Madrid EFE]* 11
    Free Elections, New Government Demanded *[Madrid EFE]* 11
    Marcos, Bishop Remark on Talks *[Mexico City Radio]* 12
    'Most Critical' Section Worked on *[Mexico City Radio]* 12
EZLN Members Report Torture, Mistreatment in Prison *[Madrid EFE]* 13
Article Assesses Union-EZLN Relations *[LA JORNADA 25 Feb]* 13
Study Recommends Infrastructure Improvements *[LA JORNADA 25 Feb]* 15
Roundup of Electoral Developments *[Madrid EFE, etc.]* 15
Correction to Poll on Voter Support for Colosio 16

CENTRAL AMERICA

El Salvador

Government Uncovers Plan To Attack Political Leaders *[San Salvador TV]* 17
Unity Movement Candidate Criticizes Onusal's Assessment *[San Salvador Radio]* 17
Prison Riot Results in Nine Inmate Deaths *[Hamburg DPA]* 17
Roundup of Electoral Developments *[San Salvador TV, etc.]* 18

Guatemala

Plot To Force President's Resignation Disclosed *[ACAN]* 18
De Leon on Resignation Rumors, Human Rights *[Guatemala City TV]* 19
Interview with Defense Minister Henriquez *[Guatemala City TV]* 19
De Leon on New Government Minister, Fuel Prices, Hospitals *[Guatemala City TV]* 21
Government Rejects Belizean 'Ultimatum' to Border Residents *[ACAN]* 22
Armed Forces Support Civilian Defense Patrols *[PRENSA LIBRE 25 Feb]* 22

Honduras

President Reina Holds News Conference *[Tegucigalpa Radio]* 22
Discua: All-Volunteer Military Service Not Feasible *[TIEMPO 23 Feb]* 24
Land Litigations Involving U.S. Citizens Viewed *[TIEMPO 24 Feb]* 24

Nicaragua

National Assembly Approves Two Constitutional Amendments *[EL NUEVO DIARIO 24 Feb]* 25
Leaders of Indian Organization Attack FSLN Activists *[Managua Radio]* 25
Chamorro Speaks on Election Anniversary *[Managua Radio]* 26
Foreign Cooperation Minister Denies Misuse of Funds *[Managua TV]* 29
Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Promotes Cooperation *[Managua TV]* 29

Panama

Foreign Minister on Senator Helms' Expropriations Remarks *[Panama City TV]* 29
Mulino Comments on OAS Election, U.S. Position *[LA PRENSA 26 Feb]* 30
Endara, Gaviria Issue Joint Declaration *[LA PRENSA 24 Feb]* 30
Consensus Candidate Lewis Galindo 'Democracy 94' Interview *[Panama City TV]* 30
Molirena Candidate's Government Plan *[EL SIGLO 22 Feb]* 31
Telemetro Electoral Poll Outcome Noted *[EL PANAMA AMERICA 23 Feb]* 33

SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina

Grand Front Constituent Assembly Member Ticket Ready *[CLARIN 24 Feb]* 34
Menem Endorses Minister; Downplays Share Price Drop *[NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS]* 34
Menem Visit to Spain Previewed; Comments on Health *[Madrid Radio]* 35
    Remarks on Madrid Arrival Noted *[Madrid Radio]* 35
UN Notified of Offer To Clear Falklands Mines *[Buenos Aires Radio]* 35
Mexican Agricultural Imports Ban Causes 'Outrage' *[Madrid EFE]* 35
Communique 'Strongly' Condemns Hebron 'Massacre' *[NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS]* 36

Bolivia

Armed Forces Query Charges Against Revolutionary Left *[Madrid EFE]* 36
MIR Asks Congress To Probe Possible Drug Links *[Madrid EFE]* 36
    Probe Request Accepted *[La Paz TV]* 37
MIR Leader Cajias Demands Explanation From Paz Zamora *[La Paz TV]* 37
Ex-Official Says Drug Dealer Gave to Campaign *[La Paz Radio]* 37
President Disagrees With U.S. Antidrug Aid Reduction *[EL MUNDO 17 Feb]* 38

Editorials View New U.S. Antidrug Policy 38
  PRESENCIA *[13 Feb]* 38
  LA RAZON *[14 Feb]* 39

Brazil

Neo-Nazis Claim Contacts With World Trade Center Bombers *[FOLHA DE SAO PAULO 24 Feb]* 40
Weekly Views Presence of Arab Terrorists *[ISTOE 23 Feb]* 40
Government Condemns Killing of Palestinians in Hebron *[Madrid EFE]* 41
Government To Sign Property Rights Agreement *[Rio de Janeiro TV]* 41
Argentine Defense Minister Visits To Resolve 'Bad' Ties *[PAGINA/12 25 Feb]* 41
  U.S. Bid Result Partnership Proposed *[FOLHA DE SAO PAULO 24 Feb]* 42
Rossi Weapons Firm Sells Shotguns to Thai Army *[GAZETA MERCANTIL 22 Feb]* 42
Britto on Electoral Alliances, PMDB, PT Prospects *[O GLOBO 16 Jan]* 42
PT Leader Lula Says Program Will Improve Capitalism *[O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO 25 Feb]* .. 45

Colombia

New Guerrilla Group Releases Wife of Putumayo Governor *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 46
Army Protects Politiicans in Eastern Region *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 46
Police Forces Deployed to Capital Prior to Elections *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 46
FARC Rebels Promise Not To Kidnap Mayors *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 47
Government, Cartel Talks Continue *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 47
  De Greiff Comments *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 47
Traffickers Plot Against U.S. Troops, Intelligence Network *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 48
U.S. Troops Rumored To Bury Toxic Waste in Malaga Bay *[Santa Fe de Bogota TV]* 48
Energy Minister Announces Plan To Sell Oil to Cuba *[Santa Fe de Bogota Radio]* 49

Ecuador

President Denies Resignation Rumors *[NOTIMEX]* 49
Energy Minister Announces Reduction in Oil Production *[Quito Radio]* 50
Thirty Companies Bid for Oil Drilling Contracts *[Quito Radio]* 50

Peru

Army Chief Denies Military Control Over Government *[Hamburg DPA]* 50
Poll Shows 43 Percent Think Fujimori in Control *[NOTIMEX]* 50
Opposition, Legal Experts Term La Cantuta Trial 'Farce' *[NOTIMEX]* 51
  Demonstration Rejects Impunity in Case *[Hamburg DPA]* 52
Jurists Group Criticizes Executive Branch Bill on Poppy *[CARETAS 17 Feb]* 52
Cali Cartel Seeks To Recover Advance Paid to 'Vaticano' *[EL COMERCIO 11 Feb]* 53
Expert Criticizes New U.S. Antidrug Policy *[EL COMERCIO 11 Feb]* 53
Daily Downplays Hopes of U.S. Antinarcotics Strategy *[EL COMERCIO 13 Feb]* 54
Imprisoned General Proposed As Presidential Candidate *[EL COMERCIO 13 Feb]* 54
New 13 Nov Civic Movement Demands Coupists' Release *[Lima TV]* 55
High Command Denies Dincote Officers' Transfer to SIN *[EXPRESO 12 Feb]* 55
People Concerned by 'Negotiation' With Terrorists *[EXPRESO 16 Feb]* 56

Venezuela

Trips by Alleged U.S. Spy Not Noted in Immigration Records *[EL NACIONAL 24 Feb]* 56
Caracas Reports Suspension of VAT, Economic Guarantees *[Caracas TV]* 56
Chamber of Deputies, Senate To Review Banco Latino Bill *[Caracas TV]* 57
  Delays Possible *[Caracas TV]* 57
President Wants Quick Approval of Constitutional Reforms *[Caracas TV]* 58
Arias Says Caldera Not Pressing for Accused Officers' Discharge *[Caracas TV]* 58
MAS Deputy Ochoa Proposes Measures Against Violence *[EL GLOBO 22 Feb]* 59
Joint Staff Operations Director on Antinarcotics Operations *[EL NACIONAL 22 Feb]* 59
Armed Forces To Conduct Joint 'Operation Maravia' Exercise *[EL UNIVERSAL 24 Feb]* 60

Parlacen Decries U.S. Plan To Charge Asylum-Seekers

PA2502222794 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2104 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Guatemala City, 25 Feb (NOTIMEX)—The Central American Parliament (Parlacen) today denounced the charging of a $130 fee to people who request political asylum in the United States—an action the U.S. Government plans to put into practice in the near future. Parlacen President Jose Guerrero, who is a Salvadoran citizen, responded bitterly to the U.S. initiative, arguing that it goes against international agreements on the right to political asylum.

Last week, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service [INS] announced the U.S. Government's intention to charge a fee to people who request political asylum to reduce INS expenses. The INS currently has more than 360,000 pending asylum requests. U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno explained a few days ago that the fee will only be charged to those people who can afford to pay it and that it will not be mandatory.

Nevertheless, the Parlacen president asserted, "To charge for political asylum is to exploit and profit from a human right we all have." Guerrero called the U.S. Government initiative "illogical," noting that it is being implemented "now in the 1990's, when there is a worldwide effort to strengthen human rights." Guerrero stressed that the United States will be the only country in the world charging for political asylum if the measure goes into effect.

Gregg Breyer, the national director of the INS Asylum Office, has reported that his office is "flooded" with false petitions for political asylum and that petitioners know the chances are slim they will be deported.

Central American Economy Ministers Meet, Review NAFTA

PA2702143494 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0230 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Text] Guatemala City, 23 Feb (NOTIMEX)—Central American economy and commerce ministers today analyzed the impact that the North American Free Trade Agreement will have on the region, it was reported in this capital.

Having established a Tariff and Customs Council, on Wednesday the ministers will approve the proposed tariff rates for some products and on Thursday, as members of the Economic Council, they will discuss the mechanism for joining the trade agreement.

A source close to the meeting said that "the region paid $1.6 billion in tariffs in recent months."

Economy Ministers Delmer Urbizo of Honduras, Enrique Cordova of El Salvador, and Pablo Pereira of Nicaragua participated in the discussions. Costa Rican Economy Minister Roberto Rojas and Guatemalan Economy Minister Eduardo Gonzalez also participated, and they will discuss options to negotiate a trade agreement with the United States, which could begin with parity for some benefits of the North American treaty.

The ministers will analyze the report titled "Commercial Relations Between Central America and the United States," to which NOTIMEX had access. The report establishes the negotiation of "parity" for some benefits or "full-rights" participation in the trilateral treaty. According to the report prepared by consultant Harold Rodas upon request from the UN Development Program (UNDP) and the Secretariat of Central American Economic Integration (SIECA), "the United States' commercial policy towards the region is not clearly defined."

The area's concern is apparent, and that is why efforts are being made to maintain the tariff benefits received from the United States and even to expand them in view of the benefits Mexico obtains by commercial agreements since NAFTA became effective in January.

The report asks: "When will Central America break the chains of dependency on a preferential system? Is the region prepared for the challenges of reciprocity?" According to Rodas, these questions arise because there "is an abyss between the political will and factual reality."

Regarding the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), through which the United States imports 4,300 duty free products from 139 countries and territories, the officials will review the 15-month extension approved by the United States which ends on 30 September. This preferential scheme seeks to sponsor beneficiary countries' economic and industrial development, and its legal base on a worldwide level is derived from Article IV of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The beneficiaries can export eligible products duty free to the United States, as long as they comply with norms of origin requirements—above all having a national value-added rate of 35 percent and a certificate of origin.

The UNDP-SIECA report, presented to the ministers on Wednesday, also examines the so-called Caribbean Basin Initiative sponsored by the United States. The initiative's goal is to increase local and foreign investments in nontraditional sectors, support economic diversification, and expand exports. The preferential system is more extensive than the GSP because no conditions are set on competition or graduality. However, the initiative excludes certain important categories, such as textiles, oil and oil derivatives, canned tuna, shoes, and leather articles. A country can lose its Caribbean Basin Initiative benefits by not cooperating in the struggle against drug trafficking, being communist, or expropriating U.S. citizens' assets, businesses, societies, or associations. The benefits may also be lost if a country does not maintain an extradition treaty with the United States.

The Central American economy ministers will analyze measures against disloyal competition implemented by different countries.

The officials began talks on Wednesday following a detailed report by SIECA Secretary Rafael Rodriguez Loucel on the 31st SIECA Directors Meeting, which ended yesterday.

Cuba

Foreign Ministry Issues Statement on Hebron Massacre

FL2702221594 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Statement issued by the Cuban Foreign Ministry on 26 February in Havana—read by announcer]

[Text] The Cuban people express their profound indignation over the horrendous massacre committed on 25 February at the Ibrahim Mosque in the West Bank town of Hebron, an occupied territory of Palestine, against the numerous faithful who were there performing their Muslim religious rituals.

This genocidal action came at a time when, despite the enormous obstacles still to be overcome, limited progress is being made in the slow and protracted process of negotiations between the organizations [as heard] and PLO representatives seeking to consolidate the agreement signed in September 1993 on Palestinian sovereignty over the Gaza Strip and the Jericho zone.

Simultaneously, a number of rounds of negotiations were being held between Israel and its neighboring Arab states, encouraged in the objective of achieving a just and long-lasting peace that would benefit all peoples of the region, based on the full recognition of their inalienable rights.

Savage actions like those carried out in Hebron do not contribute to the climate of mutual understanding and trust that could pave the way for the cherished peace; on the contrary, they stir up the passions of hatred and vengeance and deepen the wounds of the peoples, in this case, the long-suffering Arab-Palestinian people.

Although the top Israeli officials have promised to investigate the events and to impose justice on the perpetrators of the crime, it will be very difficult to restore the climate of confidence that will promote the complex and difficult process of the quest for regional peace.

It is unquestionable that the enemies of peace in the Middle East have inflicted a heavy blow on efforts being made in this regard. The Ministry of Foreign Relations of the Republic of Cuba wishes to extend to the friendly Palestinian people the feelings of solidarity and sympathy of the Cuban people on the occasion of this horrible tragedy; at the same time, it hopes that the Israeli Government officials will adopt immediate measures to prevent the repetition of such genocidal actions against the Arab-Palestinian people of the occupied territories.

In this moment of sorrow and suffering, we want to reaffirm the irrevocable solidarity of the Cuban people and Government with the just cause of the Palestinian people, to whom we ratify our support of their efforts in the quest for peace and for the full recognition of their inalienable right to build their own independent and sovereign state.

[Signed] Havana, 26 February 1994.

Fidel Castro Receives Cypriot Delegation

FL2602190694 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro has met with representatives of the Cypriot Chamber of Commerce headed by its president, Alexis Galanos, who is also president of the Cypriot Congress' Cyprus-Cuba Friendship Group.

The Cypriot delegation that is visiting our country at the invitation of the National Assembly of the People's Government [ANPP] held a lengthy meeting with the commander in chief, exchanging opinions and information on various international issues as well as on the respective situations in Cuba and Cyprus.

Galanos took advantage of this opportunity to say that to the extent that his country has always enjoyed the firm support of Cuba during the most difficult times, the people of Cyprus now wish to express their solidarity with the Cuban struggle to defend its revolution, through their presence in the country.

In addition to the Cypriot deputies, (Georgios Paraguiotides), Cypriot consul to Cuba, and ANPP President Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada were also present.

Further Remarks by Fidel Castro on Rebelde's Anniversary

FL2502145094 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] On 24 February at Radio Rebelde's Studio No. 2, in a ceremony marking Rebelde's 36th anniversary, Fidel spoke of the role that radio plays under the current circumstances:

[Begin recording] [Words indistinct] very clearly the decisive role radio has at present. I could compare this moment of the special period, this political moment the nation is facing, with those days of fighting in the Sierra Maestra, with those days in 1958 we have been mentioning here. The difference is that this period is more prolonged. I would say that this period is more difficult than that one. It requires more talent, more commitment. The work is done under very complex conditions today, particularly following the hard blows the national economy has experienced. Only as a miracle of human will could the country's resistance be explained. So now I see radio in general—I am not referring to Radio Rebelde alone, as a great rebel radio—in a period similar to that one, in a very difficult and decisive moment. And I hope the workers, the reporters, all those who work at in radio will be aware of this and will be at the level of Radio Rebelde back then.

Some day new generations will meet here again, the younger ones and some of the older ones will meet here again, and they will meet to recall the important role played by radio during these difficult days of the special period. [applause] [end recording]

[Radio Progreso adds later in the broadcast that Castro's visit to Radio Rebelde lasted over three hours and that he stressed that, for very clear and objective reasons, nothing today compares to radio. Castro pointed out that the role of radio as a means of communication is growing: The print media are limited because of paper shortages and television has significantly reduced its programing because of problems with electric power and resources. Progreso adds that Castro said that in the Sierra we faced a local tyrant supported by imperialism, while today we are confronting head-on an imperialism that is employing every recourse in an effort to destroy us. Castro underscored that today we are conducting a greater and more meritorious struggle that the one waged then.]

U.S. Support for Rangel Bill Increases

FL2502230394 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2054 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Some 30 U.S. congressmen have expressed their support for a bill to lift the blockade of Cuba, which will be discussed next month at the initiative of U.S. Representative Charles Rangel. In statements to PRENSA LATINA, Rangel's spokesman, [name indistinct], said that hearings will begin on 17 March in two House of Representatives committees, and although the bill will not be submitted to a vote, these hearings will serve to broach the subject.

The document was sent to the capitol in May 1993, bearing the title, "Bill for Free Trade With Cuba," and although it did not receive the support of the entire Congress, it became an important point of discussion both inside and outside the Legislative Branch.

In a letter to the U.S. Government, (?Congressman) Rangel asked why the United States trades with Vietnam, China, and Russia, yet cannot do so with Cuba.

Rangel's bill—Rangel is one of the U.S. Legislature's black leaders—is supported by another 30 legislators who argue that it is the population of Cuba that has suffered the damages caused by the embargo. According to spokesman [name indistinct], Rangel gets calls from people all over the United States who wish to show their support for lifting the blockade against Cuba, people who also inform the government of their interest in a change of policy toward Havana.

He pointed out that the legislator has also received strong support from large groups within the Cuban community who live not only in Miami, but in, among other places, New York, New Jersey, and Chicago. He said there has been a recent increase in the number of voices from various parts of the United States who are calling for the lifting of the embargo against Cuba, including those who were formerly in favor of the embargo.

Robaina Stresses Strengthening Relations With Exiles

FL2602131094 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Report by reporter Roberto Canela]

[Text] Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina Gonzalez has told the Pinar del Rio newspaper EL GUERRILLERO that the nation-exile community conference scheduled for next April seeks to return a normal communication process to relations between Cuba and the exile community. He added that all countries throughout the world have relations with their residents abroad, and Cuba should be no exception.

Robaina explained that we must reestablish normal relations with our community abroad, and that this relationship must include all residents abroad, not just those in the United States. He said it is impossible to speak of an opening to the world without including the existence of our fellow citizens globally. He added that it is not Cuba that excludes the hostile, aggressive ones. They exclude themselves.

Robaina concluded by saying that our foreign policy is integral to a people and a revolution accustomed to surprises and to gaining power where it appears not to exist. If foreign policy can do this, it is a reflection of the desires of the people and the Revolution.

GRANMA Says Cuban Immigrants Reject U.S. Blockade

PA2702193594 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 1300 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] GRANMA newspaper has stated that a group of persons of Cuban origin who live abroad and proclaim they want to annex the Caribbean island to the United States lack the essential ethical conditions to participate in the conference The Nation and the Immigrant Community, which will be held in Havana in April.

An article signed by journalist Nicanor Leon Cotayo and published in GRANMA's Saturday edition reports that annexationists of Cuban origin who live in the United States deploy a campaign to maintain a blockade against the people of the largest island in the Antilles.

The article—entitled "Keep Out, Annexationists"—says that in a poll recently performed in Miami 40 percent of the people stated they reject the blockade against Cuba and that the number of people who protest against this unfair measure is increasing significantly in the United States. GRANMA emphasizes that the annexationists' views coincide with those of extreme-right U.S. politicians of the last century.

Alpha-66 Reportedly Blocking Tourism

PA2702175294 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Report by Marianela Samper]

[Excerpts] FBI sources in Miami have reported that representatives from the FBI and the Attorney General's Office will meet to determine whether or not the paramilitary group Alpha-66 should be investigated regarding several threatening letters circulating in Miami. In the notes, Alpha-66 warns that they will regard as military targets anyone, anywhere in the world who visits Cuba, negotiates with the Cuban Government, or expresses support for this country. [passage omitted]

Orestes Joubert, Cubanacan deputy manager in Granma Province, reports that Alpha-66 has threatened Canadian tourists who made reservations at the new Farallon del Caribe Hotel last year.

[Begin Joubert recording] As we all know, this hotel was inaugurated in November after considerable hype. The number of reservations made in Canada in October was large. A large number of tourists were expected after November. Nevertheless, we found that this number had been greatly reduced because requests for visas for 40 percent of those who had made reservations had been turned down. We wondered about the situation. Through some Canadian papers we learned that a counterrevolutionary organization called Alpha-66 had unleashed a campaign against Cuba through newspapers and radio and television stations. Much to our satisfaction, however, this situation lasted only a few days. Since late December, 90 percent of the hotel rooms have remained occupied. [end recording]

This is new evidence showing that Alpha-66 attempts to prevent everyone from coming to Cuba with the specific purpose, in this particular instance, of blocking one of the country's leading development sectors. They did not prevail, but this attempt can be added to the long list of actions against Cuba when an inquiry is opened.

Colombia To Sell 20,000 Barrels of Crude Oil Daily

FL2502200594 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Colombian Mines and Energy Minister Guido Nule has reported that Colombia will sell between 15,000 and 20,000 barrels of crude oil daily to Cuba beginning next June. The oil will be sold at the normal international price and there will be no compensation or barter mechanism, the report adds.

Another report from Bogota adds that the Barranquilla Municipal Council has condemned the U.S. blockade against Cuba, and that Barranquilla and Matanzas will soon be declared sister cities for possible cooperation. Cuban Ambassador to Colombia Jesus Martinez also paid a visit to Barranquilla. He learned details about the project to declare Barranquilla and Matanzas sister cities and that this will probably take place when Barranquilla Mayor (Bernardo Hoyos) visits Cuba by mid-March. The ambassador held a lengthy conversation with the Barranquilla mayor.

Ambassador Martinez also held meetings with the governor of Atlantico Department, (Gustavo Bell), businessmen, health officials, university students, and professors. During the meetings they discussed prospects for cooperation in different fields, many of which will be included in the declaration of sister cities. These cooperation prospects will be developed mainly in sports and cultural, touristic, and scientific activities.

Supply of Petroleum 'Confirmed'

FL2502221094 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Interview with Pedro Perez, director of the Cuban import company, Cubametales, by reporter Carlos Santana Ojeda—place and date not given—live or recorded]

[Text] [Santana] What can you tell us, Pedro, about this report on the sale of Colombian crude oil to Cuba?

[Perez] I can tell you that for many years Cubametales [Cuba Metal Import Enterprise] has been holding talks with the Colombian company Copetrol [expansion unknown] for direct supply of Colombian crude oil to Cuba because this is a product we know very well, having been receiving it through negotiations with other commercial companies.

We recently held a new meeting to discuss the possibility of this sale under normal market conditions. The Colombian officials are studying this, and we are waiting for the final results of those studies. This is the situation today concerning the possible supply of Colombian petroleum to our country.

[Santana] Pedro, I have an AFP report that says Colombia will sell from 15,000 to 20,000 barrels of petroleum to Cuba daily as of next June. Can this be taken as a confirmation of the situation?

[Perez] Well, that is a point of reference because petroleum amounts are usually determined according to shipments received at port, not according to daily delivery of products. In any case, I believe that is an amount we can assimilate. It will be so—or it can be so—if we reach an agreement.

[Santana] Well, you have just heard the news we received here at our studio confirmed by Pedro Perez, director of Cubametales.

Sales To Commence in Jul

FL2602150694 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1255 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Telephone interview with Guido Nule Amin, Colombian Mines and Energy Minister, by reporter Maria Helena Alonso at the Radio Rebelde studio in Havana—live]

[Text] [unidentified speaker in Colombia] Hello. Just a moment please. The minister is on his way. Here he comes.

[Nule] This is Guido Nule speaking.

[Alonso] Mr. Minister, we are contacting you from Havana. This is Radio Rebelde from Havana. Minister, please, we have here a press report that includes some remarks you made, that Colombia will sell petroleum to Cuba, that this will be one of the first trade agreements between the governments of Bogota and Havana following the reestablishment of diplomatic relations in October 1993. We would like to have a confirmation from you about these remarks.

[Nule] Look, I can confirm the following for you: [words indistinct] and I were in Cuba over the past weekend to talk about the subject. We talked about that possibility and need only to brush up the final details. But there is interest (?both in Colombia and in Cuba) to conclude these negotiations.

[Alonso] And how will Cuba pay for it, Minister? What are the terms?

[Nule] Well, the idea is that Cuba will purchase the Colombian petroleum under normal commercial conditions; that is, at international prices; and Cuba will pay for it in hard currency. But there is the possibility of giving [word indistinct] for the payment.

[Alonso] When will these exports begin?

[Nule] Well, the idea is to begin exports as of July this year.

[Alonso] How much petroleum will be sold to Cuba, Minister?

[Nule] Between 15,000 and 20,000 barrels a day.

[Alonso] Between 15,000 and 20,000 barrels a day. Very well. We have thus confirmed this report. In conclusion, Minister, we would also like to know whether it is in the interest of Colombia to sell this petroleum to our country?

[Nule] Yes, of course. And this is what Cuba needs there.

[Alonso] Very well, thank you very much, Minister.

[Nule] Well, so long.

[Alonso] So long.

FAR Shares Maintenance Expertise in Workshops

FL2602030494 Havana Cuba Vision Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] With Division General Ulises Rosales del Toro in attendance, a class to demonstrate how to maintain agricultural equipment and machinery took place at the Alquizar Municipality Miscellaneous Crops Enterprise in Havana Province. Del Toro is a first vice minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR].

A group of leaders and specialists from Minaz [Ministry of the Sugar Industry], Minbas [Ministry of Basic Industry], Micons [Ministry of Construction], and (CATM) participated in this class.

Earlier, FAR specialists led by Division General (Ramon Pato Guerra) had contributed to creating the conditions that facilitated this demonstration—which is today extremely important, according to Army General Raul Castro, because the nation has the unavoidable need to maintain the equipment, parts, and technical resources that are temporarily immobilized. Castro also said this is a timely moment to extend the FAR's preservation expertise to all branches of the economy.

The Armed Forces are so far maintaining millions of pieces of equipment, which range from tanks and armaments of all kinds to gas masks. Over 500 technical cadres and machinery experts in Havana and other provinces have seen this demonstration. The intention is to hold this kind of workshop all over the country.

The participants in this class toured various departments, warehouses, and workshops belonging to this enterprise, where they saw what measures have been taken to counteract humidity and to preserve hydraulic and lubrication systems and the costly resources used in irrigation.

Everywhere, there is one constant: economizing with material and human resources, with new principles of organization, and technical discipline.

[Begin recording] [unidentified man] That is, not only does everything depend on resources, but much also depends on attitude, and how we confront problems, and on everything... [rephrases] on an organizational system about which, as is known, we indeed have quite a bit to learn (?from) our FAR comrades.

[Rosales del Toro] In the demonstration that was given here, we have been able to see how, very simply, using the same installations and the same comrades—with the magnificent training and experience they have—but by establishing a system, and maintaining the methodological procedures, and applying these experiences that all the organizations... [changes thought] and we can say that it is not just the FAR, because we have (?drunk deeply) of the nation's experiences [returns to original line of thought], these things can be introduced.

I am completely sure that the year 1994 can become a year in which to rescue the Revolution's fundamental resources, to preserve them, and guarantee that for the next two or three years, we have at least a response, on the basis of what we already have, on the basis of what we already possess. [end recording]

Beijing Invites Cuban Business Participation

FL2602164694 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1500 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] (Li Hu Wa), responsible for the Beijing town hall and Beijing's economic reform, today stated that Cuban economic and commercial representatives are welcome to participate in business operations in Beijing.

(Li Hu Wa) extended the invitation during an interview with PRENSA LATINA when he said that cooperation with other countries is the main objective of Beijing officials.

(Li Hu Wa) referred to cooperation with Cuba when he stressed the effort being made to accelerate the reform and opening process, the objectives of which are cooperation with foreign investing companies and modernization of national institutions.

Economic and commercial relations between China and Cuba have increased over the past few years with the exchange of machinery, foodstuffs, medicines, and medical equipment.

Jose Luis Rodriguez Discusses Measures With Economists

FL2502161094 Havana Cuba Vision Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] The presidents of the provincial executive councils of the National Association of Cuban Economists [ANEC] has met with the national organizing committee of the Cuban Economists Congress. Jose Luis Rodriguez, minister president of the State Committee for Finances, participated in the meeting and gave a detailed report on measures under study to streamline national finances on the basis of the workers assemblies discussions. Rodriguez pointed out that the adoption of measures to protect the lowest income strata in the nation are being studied. The meeting was useful in clarifying the participants' doubts and in discussion of alternatives.

According ANEC president Aristides Naranjo, the meeting was essential to review the progress of the work conducted in the provinces by ANEC's more than 18,000 members in support of the efforts of the Basic Cooperative Production Units, People's Councils, and Administrative Councils.

The Cuban economists are also participating in the workers assemblies to offer their opinions in the search for solutions to improve the national economy.

Information Science Cooperation With Spain Increases

FL2602182994 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1500 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] (Ramos Ruiz Cubiles), regional director of the Spanish Information Science Regional Training Center, CREI [Centro Regional de Entranamiento Informatico], has stated in this capital that cooperation between CREI and our country has increased both in quality and quantity.

(Ruiz Cubiles) added: Since we began these relations 14 years ago, we have passed through several stages. The first was advisory and course-oriented; the second, over the past five years, involved the implementation of some projects, with others still pending approval. Now we can say that the '94 Information Science Conference represents the starting point of a third stage, during which the Cuba-Spain-Unesco triangle can hopefully facilitate greater participation by public and private companies in these projects.

(Ruiz Cubiles) said that these companies must take a more entrepreneurial view, more concerned about the projects' profits and economic gains.

Roundup of Economic Activity

FL2502200794

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of fileworthy reports on economic developments in Cuba carried on Havana radio and television in Spanish between 22 and 25 February.

Radio Rebelde at 0000 GMT on 22 February reports that eight Havana universities will initiate graduate level summer schools to run from 20 June to 19 August. According to Deputy Minister of Education Rodolfo Alarcon Ortiz, the courses will be open to foreign students, whose tuition will supplement university income.

Radio Reloj in its 2030-3100 GMT newscast on 22 February reports the following:

Two new centers for making biological pesticides have been inaugurated in Sancti Spiritus Province. The centers are part of a project financed by the nongovernmental organization "Bread for the World" and are located in the Banao area in Sancti Spiritus Municipality and on the Nueva Cuba Agricultural-Livestock Production Cooperative in Cabaiguan.

Cuba and the Dominican Republic have signed a sports cooperation agreement whereby Cuban swimming and track and field trainers will offer their knowledge to Dominican athletes as of March. The agreement provides for consulting by Cuban trainers in other sports as well.

Guantanamo is to have a provincial biopharmaceutical laboratory as of next month, for the production of medicines and vaccines for humans and animals.

"Camaguey construction workers have built works worth some 77 million pesos. This figure represents a drop of slightly over 50 percent compared to 1989." Over 1,300 low-cost houses were finished in 1993. Only 500 of these were built by organizations belonging to the sector itself, "which does not correspond to the resources and means that the Ministry of Construction has at its disposal, as manager of these investments."

Cuba Vision Network at 2320 GMT on 22 February reports that self- sufficiency and service granges are being formed in high-potential municipalities in Havana Province at the initiative of the Cuban Government and the Communist Party of Cuba. "These granges are to become suppliers for nearby towns, gastronomic units, and workers' dining rooms." Ten Havana Province municipalities are to have such structures in marginal lands, with a view to solving the demand for such production in the area. Also, three new tourist installations have been inaugurated in Holguin Province: a marina in Boca de Sama [Bay]; a new restaurant, El Fuerte, in Guarda la Vaca; and the La Roca nightclub.

Radio Rebelde at 1255 GMT on 23 February reports that as part of the solidarity with Cuba campaign being carried out in Canada, the ship Energy arrived in Cuba bringing donations estimated at $250,000. The donations include 10 containers with some 80 tons of specialized medical equipment, bicycles, papers, and wheelchairs.

Cuba Vision at 0200 GMT on 23 February reports that in the last 32 years over 221 million vaccination doses have been distributed in Cuba. This resulted in the elimination of polio in 1962, diphtheria in 1969, neonatal tetanus in 1972; there were only two cases of whooping cough reported in 1993. There have been no cases of measles in 18 months. There were fewer than 10 cases each of rubella and mumps in 1993. Meningitis was widespread in the 80's but there were only 69 cases in 1993.

Radio Rebelde at 1800 GMT on 23 February reports that representatives from more than 20 countries are participating in the Computing-94 conference being held at the Havana Convention Center. Computer Science Expert (Arturo Rivagorda), who is also chairman of the Spanish national association of computer security systems, in stressing the importance of this conference, said that the efforts being made in this area are the same as those being made worldwide and that Cuba can perfectly well become integrated with countries of other regions, including Europe.

Cuba Vision at 2320 GMT on 23 February reports that the Labor Union of the Banco Popular Espanol made a donation to the campaign for the children of Chernobyl receiving treatment in Cuba. Workers donate 1 percent of their wages; so far, they have collected $4,000.

Radio Reloj at 1530 GMT on 25 February reports that members of the National Association of Innovators and Efficiency Experts in Santiago de Cuba have managed to establish a new system to be added to the irrigation system that will help cut fuel by 13 percent. The provincial board has thus declared that this new system will be added to all equipment with Motor A-41 during the first quarter of this year.

Health Cooperation Agreement Signed With Colombia

PA2402132894 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 1300 GMT 20 Feb 94

[From the "Morning Information Review" newscast]

[Text] Colombia and Cuba signed in Santa Fe de Bogota a cooperation agreement on [word indistinct] basic health, epidemiological monitoring and control, and vaccines, as well as the supply of medicines and equipment. The document, signed by (Eduardo Alvarado), Colombian deputy public health minister, and Jorge Antelo, Cuban deputy public health minister, establishes Cuba's commitment to support the strengthening of basic health care with technical assistance and the exchange of information to create a Colombian model of family medicine.

Cuba will also cooperate in developing a mother-infant program with an emphasis on reproductive health, including perinatal care and the reduction of mother and infant mortality. Colombians will import [words indistinct] for the biological control of vectors, as well as 200 [words indistinct], computerized medical technology. Colombia confirmed it is purchasing 2.5 million units of vaccine against Hepatitis B. In addition, personnel will be trained in Cuba. According to Alvarado, his government is fully committed to strengthening the ties of friendship with Cuba.

Education Minister on Quality of Teachers, System

PA2402130394 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0108 GMT 20 Feb 94

[Text] Havana, 19 Feb (EFE)—Cuban Education Minister Luis Ignacio Gomez Gutierrez asserted today, "we don't have any unnecessary teachers" and, despite the island's economic problems, "no schools will be closed." The minister said in an interview published by the official GRANMA newspaper today: "In education, our criteria is that we don't have any unnecessary teachers or professors who have a vocation for this beautiful mission."

"The Revolution will never relinquish this socialist victory and no school will be closed," the Cuban education minister stressed. "Education is the Revolution's colossal achievement; its most beautiful treasure. In the past 35 years, we have organized and implemented the most accomplished education system ever conceived in an underdeveloped country. Our system is comparable to those in many developed nations," Gomez Gutierrez added.

The Cuban minister emphasized the good results obtained with the improvement of the education system's organization and study and textbook programs. "However, the country's most important achievement is the creation of a powerful army of teachers. They have been a decisive factor in the battle to attain quality education," he asserted. In this sense, Gomez indicated there are thousands of teachers in reserve "who are critical to being able to permanently improve the quality of teaching personnel." He observed that the current optimization of the education system "does not imply that personnel will be reduced. Rather, it will allow teachers, who are not currently required at schools during the next academic year, to further their academic training."

The minister added that starting in September, the Upper-Level Teachers' Institute will organize several improvement courses. Also, teachers who have not completed their studies will be able to get their degrees. Gomez said the enhancement of the teachers' academic standing, due to its contents, "is essentially a political task."

Haiti

Groups Reproach Clinton for 'Indifference'

FL2602002194 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] In a letter to U.S. President Bill Clinton dated 24 February, 14 Haitian people's organizations expressed their concerns in view of the latest developments in the Haitian crisis resulting from the September 1991 coup d'etat. Among the groups writing were the following: the Sun of Justice for the Liberation of the Haitian People, OSJLPH, [Organisation Soleil Justice pour la Liberation du Peuple Haitien, also known as Soley Jistis pou Liberasyon Pep Ayisyen, OSJLPA], the Organization for the Defense of Youth, ODEJ, [Organisation de la Defense de la Jeunesse], and the St. John Bosco basic church communities.

The letter's signatories reproached President Clinton, among others, for his indifference in the face of the current climate of deterioration in the country, including an upsurge in acts of violence, both in the capital and in the provincial cities.

The 14 people's organizations wrote the following: We deplore your silence about the horrors (?being committed) in Haiti. By acting thus, you send a conspiratorial signal to the Haitian military and to the armed civilians who continue to slaughter the population. Remember that Americans of Haitian origin voted for you because they were convinced that your presence in the White House would inaugurate a new era for Haiti.

Mr. President, one cannot avoid noting that again today you are putting pressure on President Aristide to appoint a new prime minister, but the current climate is not really appropriate for that, the signatories of the letter pointed out.

They further demand the departure of General Cedras, the disarming of the paramilitary groups, and the return of President Aristide on a specific date.

Joseph Delivers Plan to Aristide; Paul Calls for Unity

FL2502190794 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] On the evening of 23 February, President Jean-Bertrand Aristide attended, with a group of parliamentarians including Senate President Firmin Jean-Louis and Chamber of Deputies President Frantz Robert Monde, a reception held in his honor at the Haitian Embassy in Washington on the eve of his visit to France which will begin on 27 February. For the first time, the plan that was worked out by a group of parliamentarians with the support of the State Department was delivered to President Aristide in a sealed envelope by the former president of the lower chamber, Antoine Joseph, who asserted that he hopes for an answer from the head of state. President Aristide, who was speaking [on that occasion], stated that everyone knows why no government can function in Haiti and why it is impossible [for him] to appoint a new prime minister. He nevertheless asked the parliamentarians to forget about their political affiliations and work toward unity among all Haitians.

With this unity in mind, some of the parliamentarians have decided to extend their stay in Washington so they can continue the dialogue to find a solution to the crisis. The president has promised to remain in contact with them during his trip.

Port-au-Prince Mayor and National Front for Change and Democracy spokesman Evans Paul, who attended the reception, asked all factions represented in Washington to fuse their various plans into a final plan. We are all asking for a return to democratic order; so, let us all together try to speak with only one voice, Paul added.

President Aristide was to leave Washington on 24 February for New Hampshire, where he will depart for Paris.

ACP, SG Parliamentarians Oppose Aristide Counterproposal

FL2502191994 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Passages within quotation marks in Creole]

[Excerpts] Alliance [for Parliamentary Cohesion, ACP] and Socialist Group [GS] parliamentarians are opposed to the counterproposal of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. While supporting the plan of the parliamentary delegation that is negotiating in Washington, they say President Aristide must appoint a new prime minister to fill the power vacuum. The following is a report by Daly Valet:

[Begin recording] [Valet] [passage omitted] "But in Haiti the ACP parliamentarians do not agree with the plan proposed by Aristide. According to Pierre Simon Georges, the head of this bloc, they remain committed to the plan of the Haitian parliamentary delegation asking that the president of the country appoint a new head of government as soon as possible."

[Georges] "It is normal that.... The prime minister has resigned." Besides, the resignation was announced long before. The president is duty bound to fill this vacuum as soon as possible. But this has not been done. "So I believe the first point in whichever agenda, whichever plan" is the designation of the prime minister. "What can be included in the plan after the designation of the prime minister? All the other things they [not further identified] want."

[Valet] So you do not agree with Aristide's plan which speaks of the departure of the military officers first?

[Georges] Not at all. "I am one of the parliamentarians who do not agree that Cedras or any other military should step down if the amnesty law is not first passed. Besides, that is what gives me a feeling of security to discuss at the chamber as a deputy. That is what gives me the feeling of security to use a microphone to say whatever ensues from my political options."

[Valet] "As regards Aristide's return 10 days after the appointment of the head of government, Deputy Pierre Simon Georges says he has no objection to that, provided that head of government would have time to establish social peace in the country. But the deputy has a reservation in that he does not believe there can be social peace in the country 10 days after the appointment of a head of government. [passage omitted]

"The stances are not different within the GS. Deputy Edmonde Supplice Beauzile of the Nationalistic Progressive Revolutionary Party of Haiti [Panpra] advises that they have no comments to make on the plan proposed by President Aristide because GS President Duly Brutus signed, jointly with the parliamentary delegation, a plan to be delivered to Aristide. This parliamentary plan is supported by Panpra coordinator Serge Gilles, according to Deputy Beauzile."

[Beauzile] "At present, there is one member of my group who signed another plan. So I do not need to give my opinion about the plan set up by President Aristide."

[Valet] "So, as a parliamentarian who is affiliated to a political party evolving within a [political bloc], you do not share the outlines of this plan which provides for the return of Aristide 10 days after the appointment of the prime minister?"

[Beauzile] "Let me tell you, Daly, you know that one of the characteristics of the GS is our coherence. If we have made a statement saying that we have accepted a plan, we cannot accept one today, then accept another that comes tomorrow, and then accept another that comes the day after tomorrow. By doing so, I would give you an opportunity to say that I belong to an incoherent group." [passage omitted]

[Valet] "Whereas several parliamentarians in Haiti, the delegation of parliamentarians, the United Nations, and the U.S. Government are putting pressure on Aristide to appoint a new prime minister and whereas, for his part, the president has made a counterproposal in which he asks for the departure of the military officials before he chooses a new head of government, the office at the Senate of the Republic that is presided over by Bernard Sansaricq is working toward the establishment of a new government, an exceptional government, according to what he said." [end recording]

Sansaricq Advocates New Ad Hoc Government

FL2502230294 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] According to Senator Bernard Sansaricq, for some officers of the Army General Staff, the Governors Island accord and the New York pact are considered null and void. The legislators, opposed to President Aristide, are reportedly ready to vote for the formation of a new government. It would be, according to Sen. Sansaricq, an ad hoc government, the duties of which are provided for in Article 111 of the 1987 Constitution.

On the question of Article 149, Bernard Sansaricq noted the refusal by the president-in-exile to immediately nominate a new prime minister in compliance with Article 148. According to the president of one of the two offices of the Senate, it is urgent to form the ad hoc government to solve the political deadlock.

Bernard Sansaricq, who asserts that he met with the Army General Staff, revealed that some officers of that institution regard the Governors Island accord and the New York pact null and void. He indicated, however, that General Cedras did not openly express himself on the matter.

On the subject of the commander in chief, invited to the parliament at the beginning of the week, Bernard Sansaricq still expresses indignance at the general's refusal to answer the senators' questions. Sansaricq considers it a lack of respect for the Senate of the Republic. Mr. Sansaricq also explained that he did not formally ask for the resignation of Gen. Cedras, but would be ready to do so if it were a Senate decision.

Police Arrest Reported Cali Cartel Drug Networkers

FL2502222094 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] A drug-trafficking network led by a Colombian man was broken over the past few days. According to the head of the Information and Joint Coordination Center [CICC], Colonel Antoine Atouriste, the head of the drug network, Juan Alberto Ramirez (Azurio), reportedly linked to the Cali cartel, was arrested on 11 February at his home in (Pegguy-Ville). Five kg of cocaine, weapons, ammunition, and $100,000 were seized in Ramirez (Azurio)'s home.

Two other men from Colombia, two from The Bahamas, and one from the Dominican Republic, linked to this network, which is considered the most active in recent months in Haiti, were also apprehended in the north of the country and in Port-au-Prince, according to the head of the CICC.

Ten Kg Cocaine Seized at Airport, Priestess Arrested

FL2502232194 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] The antidrug brigade in Haiti netted a new catch of drug dealers in Port-au-Prince where about 10 kg of cocaine were seized on 24 February at the Port-au-Prince Airport and three persons linked to drug trafficking were arrested. Jean Max Blanc filed a report:

[Begin recording in Creole] On 24 February, the antidrug police in Haiti arrested a voodoo priestess who was trying to travel with 12 kg of cocaine. The police arrested Mrs. Fritz Betty Obin as she was attempting to travel to the United States aboard American Airlines. Mrs. Obin confessed that she was surprised by her arrest because she uses powerful magic to help the drug pass through. She admitted that from 4 May 1993 to 7 January 1994, she had already traveled with 30 kg of cocaine. The amount that the antidrug police seized would have brought this amount up to 42 kg that the voodoo priestess would passed through.

The national antidrug brigade advises that last week, six foreigners, two men from Colombia, two from The Bahamas, one from the Dominican Republic, and one from Venezuela of Colombian origin were arrested. At that time, the police seized more than $100,000 U.S.

Police seized five kg of cocaine in the house of Juan Alberto Ramirez (Azujo), alias Pedro. According to one of the antidrug brigade authorities, Mr.(Azujo) is reportedly the head of a cartel sending drugs to the United States through Haiti.

A kg of cocaine is worth more than $10,000 U.S. [end recording]

Correction to MOP Supports Aristide Plan

FL2502180194

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "MOP Supports Aristide Plan, 29 Mar Return," which appeared in the 25 February Latin America DAILY REPORT, page 6: Column one, paragraph three, first sentence, make read: ...urges the entire democratic sector to unite... (replacing "diplomatic" with "democratic")

Marcos Reiterates Demand for Government's Resignation

PA2602033394 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2300 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] San Cristobal de las Casas (Mexico), 25 Feb (EFE)—"Subcommander Marcos," leader of the Zapatist National Liberation Army (EZLN) today reiterated that Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari should resign. The rebel leader added that although the government's resignation will not be decided at the dialogue he is holding with Peace Commissioner Manuel Camacho Solis in San Cristobal de las Casas, "we still have to state our position at the national level, whether individually or at the bargaining table."

The Zapatist leader said: "The federal government, the federal executive branch, and its cabinet should resign, because how can this government guarantee that the people's will, as expressed at the polls, be respected when the government has already defined its position from the outset in favor of one of the candidates?"

President Salinas' resignation and other points concerning democracy are among the political demands made by the EZLN since its 1 January insurrection in the southeastern Mexican state of Chiapas.

Noting that "no one can be both judge and jury," Marcos said there should be a transition government whose members should not belong to any political party, or a government formed out of an agreement among the various political parties, which will then be able to organize the 21 August presidential elections.

Marcos said the regional conflict will not be resolved "unless there is a radical, fundamental change—a deep-rooted change that will support a solution. [no closing quotation marks as received]

Marcos added that southern Mexico (Chiapas, Tabasco, Yucatan, Campeche, and Quintana Roo) is the most exploited region in Mexico—an area "where more resources are extracted and less benefits are received, a situation that will only worsen under NAFTA." Marcos said NAFTA "will designate the southeastern region as a banana republic, but instead of a banana-growing region, it will be an oil and electricity region." He added, "The country will be divided, and poverty in the southeast will increase to even more unimaginable and inhuman levels, worse than those seen in Somalia."

With regard to the progress made at the Chiapas peace talks now under way at the San Cristobal Cathedral, Marcos reiterated that the Indian groups have been very clear in stating that the resolution of problems must be at a national level.

"The toughest and most difficult part" of the negotiations is still pending, Marcos stressed. He attributed the spectacular progress and coverage of 50 percent of the agenda to the fact that the talks began by dealing with the least divisive issues "to send a signal to the country that peace, perhaps, is possible."

Free Elections, New Government Demanded

PA2702182094 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1721 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Mexico City, 27 Feb (EFE)—It was disclosed today that the Zapatist National Liberation Army (EZLN) command last night released a communique demanding free and democratic elections, the Mexican Government's resignation, and its replacement by a transition government that will guarantee equality.

To guarantee free elections, the EZLN has called for the legalization of the presence and participation of citizens in the observation of the electoral process, thus sanctioning the process' legality and guaranteeing the elections' legitimacy.

The EZLN command establishes that a necessary condition for democratic elections is the resignation of authorities "who attained power through electoral frauds" and the formation of a transition government so there will be equality and respect for all political trends.

The sixth day of Peace Commissioner Manuel Camacho Solis' dialogue with the EZLN representatives and the mediation of Samuel Ruiz, bishop of San Cristobal de las Casas, concluded with a communique that points out that the peace dialogue sessions have continued in a spirit of work and responsibility.

"We cannot overlook"—the document states—"that at this time we are dealing with the most critical part of the agreements. This means that we will work with a spirit of responsibility. We are aware that everything that is agreed upon at the dialogue in Chiapas will have profound repercussions on the country's future."

The communique, signed by "Subcommander Marcos," Commissioner Manuel Camacho, and Bishop Samuel Ruiz, points out that the joint effort, seriousness, work, and exchange of ideas for the purpose of listening to and understanding each other to find the best possible solutions will culminate in positive results.

The EZLN and Mexican Government are in a negotiations process to resolve the armed conflict that began on 1 January with the EZLN insurrection and the armed clashes that cost the lives of at least 200 people, wounded approximately 500, and displaced thousands from their hometowns in the mountains of Chiapas.

During the six days that have passed since the peace talks began at the San Cristobal Cathedral, progress has been made on approximately 50 percent of the scheduled agenda, the part that deals with the immediate and urgent demands of the Indian population. Nevertheless, the current discussion has come down to the points that deal with Mexico's general problems, including political issues and demands such as the demand for democratic elections and the mechanisms to guarantee equality and legitimacy.

Marcos, Bishop Remark on Talks

PA2602041994 Mexico City Radio ACIR in Spanish 0126 GMT 26 Feb 94

[From the "ACIR Radio News" newscast]

[Text] [Unidentified announcer] Let's go to another issue. One that is, of course, also very important. We know you are all waiting eagerly for this information. We are referring to the situation in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, where the peace and reconciliation talks are being held. The usual news conference was not held after the fifth day of talks today. During this week, Peace Commissioner Manuel Camacho, Subcommander Marcos on behalf of the EZLN [Zapatist National Liberation Army], and Bishop Samuel Ruiz, as mediator in this conflict, held a daily news conference to give an update of the talks to reporters at approximately 1800 to 1830.

Good evening, Jose Luis Sarmiento in San Cristobal de las Casas. Can you tell us what happened? Why was there no news conference?

[Sarmiento] As you said, there will be no statements to the press on advances in the peace and reconciliation talks in Chiapas. Francisco de los Santos, the official spokesman of the San Cristobal de las Casas bishopric, reported there will be no reports on the talks between Peace Commissioner Manuel Camacho Solis and the EZLN delegates until further notice. This is all we were told. We were also told the EZLN list of demands received positive responses.

[Announcer] We understood from the information you reported to the first edition of the ACIR Radio News newscast at 1300 that Subcommander Marcos met with reporters who write for newspapers in Mexican states and told them there is still a long road to traverse to achieve peace with dignity, although important advances had been made and significant points resolved, 50 percent of them positively. He also said the talks are now entering a more difficult stage.

[Sarmiento] Correct. As you reported Subcommander Marcos said this morning the most difficult part of the talks for peace and reconciliation in Chiapas had begun. He said peace will not come out of San Cristobal de las Casas, only the mechanisms to reach it. He said, as you already stated, although there have been favorable responses to problems—especially those dealing with health, housing, education, among others—in the Chiapas Indian communities, those are local demands. They now also expect a positive response to their national demands, such as justice, land, liberty, and self-government for all the Indian communities in the country.

[Begin Subcommander Marcos recording] The points that have yet to be discussed are the most difficult ones. We decided to start with the points that were apparently easier to resolve, so as to advance. The most difficult, controversial points are the ones that follow. The talks will become more difficult, because now we will discuss demands the companeros have asked, not for themselves, rather, for the country. [Words indistinct] respect for the Indians, [words indistinct] self-government program, reform of the Fourth Article, guaranteed self-government, and other measures [words indistinct] [end recording]

[Sarmiento] Subcommander Marcos and the 18 EZLN delegates who are participating in the talks, as you said, met with representatives of the provincial newspapers in Mexico this morning.

In addition, the seven bishops who comprise the Reconciliation Commission, which is presided by Adolfo Suarez Rivera, visited the Chiapas highlands for the third time. They said they have already seen encouraging signs in favor of peace; nevertheless, they called on Mexican society not to close their hearts to the just demands of the communities. Tapachula Chiapas Bishop Felipe Arizmendi stated:

[Begin Arizmendi recording] I hope we do not close our minds and hearts to hear the community's just demands. From the start, the three Chiapas bishops have stated we do not agree with the armed action, but it should serve as a warning, because violence will erupt at any time and in any manner if margined groups are neglected. [end recording]

[Sarmiento] All the domestic and foreign reporters who are here in San Cristobal de las Casas are still attentive to the peace and reconciliation talks.

'Most Critical' Section Worked on

PA2702161294 Mexico City Radio ACIR Network in Spanish 1515 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] After 48 hours of tension and silence Manuel Camacho Solis, peace and reconciliation commissioner for Chiapas, and the Zapatist National Liberation Army [EZLN] released a brief communique disclosing that they are currently working on the most critical part of the agreements but that they expect positive results.

For eight days since the opening of the talks Camacho has been unable to leave the area. There have been reports to the effect that the situation inside the capital [as heard] is difficult.

Meanwhile, the Indian Revolutionary Clandestine Committee General Command issued a text asserting that to achieve free and democratic elections, the head of the federal Executive Branch must resign and a transition government be formed. It also calls for truly free and democratic elections with equal rights and duties for the political organizations that are struggling for power.

Strangely, however, the communique signed by Subcommander Marcos is written in biblical language; it is as if they extracted their words and phrases from the Bible. It is a very, very strange communique.

EZLN Members Report Torture, Mistreatment in Prison

PA2602194794 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2010 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] San Cristobal de las Casas, 25 Feb (EFE)—The 24 alleged Zapatists imprisoned in Tuxtla Gutierrez, capital of Chiapas State, have presented reports of torture, isolation, and starvation for several days, which are currently being investigated by the state authorities.

In an interview held on Thursday evening with Chiapas Governor Javier Lopez Moreno at Cerro Hueco Prison, the 24 members of the Zapatist National Liberation Army (EZLN) complained about mistreatment. Among other things, the Zapatists said they were denied medical attention and food. They added that they were isolated and some of them tortured for hours and that no authority tried to prevent this, a government source told EFE today.

Father Pablo Romo, member of the Fray Bartolome de las Casas Human Rights Center (led by Bishop Samuel Ruiz, mediator in the armed conflict), told EFE the Zapatists were subject to physical and psychological torture. "The tortures and threats—which he did not specify—mainly occurred at the time of their arrest rather than in prison, but other arbitrary actions occurred there," Romo said.

The EZLN members were arrested, along with 46 comrades who have been released, shortly after the EZLN's 1 January military uprising, and their release has been demanded on numerous occasions by nongovernment human rights organizations and the EZLN general command.

Following his meeting with the prisoners, the governor said an investigation will be ordered "to ascertain if the inmates' complaints are justified" and, if they are, the culprits will be "severely" punished. "I am interested in an investigation to learn if it is true this abuse was perpetrated. All the complaints will be investigated because no inmate's human rights should be violated," the governor stated.

Lopez Moreno visited the Cerro Hueco Prison a day after meeting with Jorge Madrazo Cuellar, chairman of the National Human Rights Commission. It is surmised they discussed the Zapatists' case during the meeting.

Pablo Romo told EFE that the Zapatists who have already been released were also subject to arbitrary actions at the time of their arrest and during their imprisonment and that "it is almost certain they will file criminal charges against their aggressors." Romo admitted the government is "firmly" determined to receive and solve their complaints because it will not let the authorities perpetrate illegal actions.

Two weeks ago the Chiapas Congress approved a law to punish torture, and it adheres to other reforms carried out by Chiapas State legislation within the last 40 days to decriminalize certain activities, including riots and demonstrations against the government, which were formerly punishable. The reforms were followed by the approval of an amnesty law for the Chiapas rebels and other groups which might rise up in arms, but it holds the amnesty contingent with the surrender of weapons.

Thirty-eight of the 70 Zapatists arrested at the beginning of the armed conflict were released on 28 January, and eight more were released on 22 February following recommendations from the Attorney General's Office to the state's Superior Court of Justice. All the released rebels had to pay between $330 and $666 each to leave prison. Their bail was paid by the National Indian Institute and the Fund for the Management of State Justice, given the EZLN's lack of resources.

Article Assesses Union-EZLN Relations

PA2602005094 Mexico City LA JORNADA in Spanish 25 Feb 94 pp 1, 13

[Article by Luis Hernandez Navarro]

[Text] On 2 January, just hours after the EZLN [Zapatist National Liberation Army] declared war on the Mexican Army, the ARIC [expansion unknown]-Ocosingo Federation of Unions [ARIC-Union de Uniones de Ocosingo] stated in an advertisement published in the national press: "Over the years, we have made demands and managed to establish a direct and fruitful dialogue with government institutions to expand the support necessary for advancing regional development. This is supported by the actions we have carried out with the government of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari...."

ARIC called the EZLN's armed revolt an event that would threaten security, increase anguish, and impede the attainment of justice. It also called on peasants in the region to reject violence. The advertisement, which was also signed by two regional peasant groups, was, in essence, a declaration of war on the EZLN. Strangely, however, the published advertisement did not include the names of all of the directors of the relevant organizations—obviously, they were not in the union offices at the time—although all of these organizations have a long tradition of consulting one another before making important decisions.

Actually, the advertisement was planned and written in a government office, and its objective was to "isolate" the Indian rebellion and present it to the public as an initiative that lacked regional consensus. Although, the federal government ultimately had enough insight not to continue publishing similar ads, the damage had already been done. The long-standing problem between the two political forces that work in the same territory—those sympathetic to the EZLN and part of ARIC's directors and advisers—was made public.

Very quickly, however, the EZLN was able to prove to the nation that its decision to go to war had ample support in the communities where it operated and that it was a political-military force formed by Indians from various tribes. As if this were not enough, the vast majority of the organizations in the State Council of Indian and Peasant Organizations (CEOIC) of Chiapas [Consejo Estatal de Organizaciones Indigenas y Campesinas (CEOIC) de Chiapas] decided to support the Zapatist struggle. In turn, positions like the one initially adopted by the ARIC directorate are now viewed as being virtually isolated.

In the same geographic and social arenas in which the ARIC directorate and the EZLN currently operate, other forces with less conspicuous political profiles exist—for example, the UGOCP [General Union of Workers and Peasants of Mexico], the CNC [National Peasant Confederation], the CIOAC [Independent Federation of Agricultural Workers and Peasants], and so on. Actually, whether with or without intending to do so, the EZLN current penetrated the rank-and-file of these organizations and won them over to its cause.

The history of the Federation of Unions, as that of any peasant organization subjected to the harassment of its natural enemies and the state government, is far from idyllic. After growing and becoming the most important autonomous organization in terms of numbers in Chiapas State, it has suffered from a painful split by those who have built credit unions and decided to postpone the struggle for land. It suffered from an inefficient and corrupt board of directors, which was finally dismissed. It had to face the departure of a series of leaders and ejido [a form of land tenure] unions, who without completely giving up their organization have decided to operate outside the organization. After suffering from the separation of the ejido unions, it faced the worst experiences in coffee marketing amid a somewhat severe criticism of bureaucratism. It finally saw how in its ranks the young and old became increasingly tired of getting scant practical results via peaceful means and decided to resort to the use of weapons. In sum, it saw how its initial project crumbled while totally different political positions were being adopted inside the organization.

Even though it cannot be said all the communities and all the individuals of the region are behind the EZLN (has there ever been a social movement in which this has occurred?), it is evident the call for an armed struggle succeeded, which does not mean all the ARIC rank and file supported the EZLN. The number of troops mobilized by the Zapatists during the occupation of municipal capitals and the nearby towns on 1 January is evidence of that.

After the unfortunate initial deployment of troops, the ARIC Board of Directors called for a political solution to the conflict, a respect for the people and belongings of those who do not believe in the armed solution, a return home, freedom of movement, and peace with justice. Meanwhile, the EZLN thought certain ARIC leaders and advisers had betrayed them and had become instruments of the government. A significant number of organizations of the CEOIC believes ARIC seeks an isolation of the Zapatists.

Some 300 people, under ARIC's influence, participated in a pilgrimage on 20 February for "peace, reconciliation, and respect for human rights." Organization leaders did not attend. According to news reports, calls of vivas for the EZLN were heard during the event. The demands made during the pilgrimage were published in at least two national newspapers a day later. Even though the event was given a religious tone locally, at a national level it appeared as part of a broader campaign aimed at showing there are other means of struggle in the conflict area. In fact, the initiative seems to be the result of a broader proposal: to make ARIC appear as a third force in the conflict and to include it in the negotiations.

The accusations the EZLN has made against certain ARIC leaders, which it called traitors, seem unjustified. To accuse someone of treason in a situation of war is very serious. Certainly, among ARIC leaders there are probably former EZLN members who did not want to join the armed struggle. That does not make them informers, however. The purge of political forces is a natural process in every institution, and it can hardly be resolved by settling scores. Certain ARIC advisers have explicitly declared, even if they do not share the armed struggle, they are far from accusing those who have taken that path. The EZLN's accusation can work against it. A provocation by any person affected by the current rebellion against an ARIC member will be presented to public scrutiny as a Zapatist aggression.

The ARIC leadership must state, however, its initiative to present itself as a third party in disagreement; first, because there are more people in its situation; second, because ARIC has the doors of negotiation open to its demands equally or more than the rest of the state's peasant organizations, individually or through the CEOIC; third, because the other negotiation, that of war or peace, is held between the EZLN and the peace commissioner, and ARIC is not a party in this phase of the process. Just as a strike is negotiated between those who declare it and the boss—and not between those who oppose it—peace is discussed with those who have declared war. There is no third force in disagreement here, rather, a mediator who has been named and accepted by the parties. If given the EZLN postulate of "everything for all..." the ARIC leadership sets first its presence in the territory of conflict; it will see its prestige before public opinion deteriorate more than it already has.

The Union of Ejidos of the Jungle and the EZLN have named their corresponding "commissioners for peace" and have begun to negotiate the path to reconciliation from below. Other segments within ARIC seem to have undertaken a similar path. The fact is significant and encouraging, but it is not enough. In a context in which a national agenda much broader than that of four municipalities is being negotiated, the ARIC leadership is faced with the dilemma of endorsing this process or appearing at best, despite its statements, as victim of a narrow vision of its past and interests and, at worst, as an instrument of the counterinsurgency.

Study Recommends Infrastructure Improvements

PA2602030394 Mexico City LA JORNADA in Spanish 25 Feb 94 p 57

[Report by Raul Llanos Samaniego]

[Text] According to an analysis by the National Association of the Processing Industry (Canacintra), the past decade's economic crisis and the "painful" adjustments of the current economic policy have cost the country in terms of development of the infrastructure. The federal government must urgently invest more funds in this sector, or it will be difficult for Mexico to achieve sustained economic development.

According to the Association's study, the infrastructure in its current state will require sufficient funds, a desire to produce, and time to develop projects. This represents a challenge for the public and private sectors as they must play a more active role in this area.

The report added that despite the advancements made by the current government, it is necessary to redouble efforts. As we approach the 21st century, there will be approximately 100 million Mexicans whose demands for infrastructure and communications services will rapidly grow.

"Much remains to be done to expand investments and improve services. Federal, state, and municipal authorities, businessmen, and workers must share the responsibility. Neither the government nor the private sector can carry out the modernization alone, the report noted.

In assessing the condition of the highway system, the Canacintra document said that maintenance of that system and of rural roads has been lagging for years. It adds that there are not enough roads in some parts of the country, there is lack of security in cargo and passenger transportation, and high tolls keep traffic flow on the largest freeways below capacity.

There are plans to channel sufficient and timely fiscal resources to the maintenance of prioritized stretches of the federal highway system. There are also plans to improve concession guidelines based on "realistic financial analyses," in addition to reinforcing the training and moralization of the Federal Highway Police and supplying adequate equipment.

In analyzing public transportation, the report notes that the equipment is obsolete, the service lacks "overall quality," very little is known about the contents of the new regulation on weights and measures, and there is limited standardization of cargo handling.

In view of the importance of this activity, Canacintra has recommended that the federal government encourage equipment upgrades and reconsider the deadlines for implementing the regulations on weights and dimensions, which should then be published.

The analysis also included railroads, ports, telecommunications, and the national electricity service, areas in which we are lagging behind and which therefore require attention so the productivity of enterprises is not negatively affected when they are facing international competition.

The report added that expanding the infrastructure will encourage the proper use of competitive advantages already enjoyed by some productive activities in the country and will reduce inequalities in regional development.

Finally, the analysis says that focusing on areas where we are behind, deregulating various areas, allowing private capital to play a more active role with the public sector, improving regulations, and expanding channeled fiscal resources are key factors in modernizing the infrastructure to strengthen Mexico's competitive position in the international community.

Roundup of Electoral Developments

PA2402202194

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on developments related to the Mexican elections, scheduled for 21 August 1994.

Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de Leon, campaign manager for presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio, of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI, is quoted in the "Mexico and NAFTA Report," published by the LATIN AMERICAN NEWSLETTERS in London. Zedillo said that for the first time, the PRI will be facing a true challenge in the elections. "We will have to attain full credibility," he said adding that the party "will be judged much harder than other political parties." (Madrid EFE in Spanish 1610 GMT 17 Feb 94)

Colosio on 17 February visited Chilpancingo, Guerrero State, where he met with PRI members. Colosio told them that his main commitment is "to struggle decisively against inequality." (Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0435 GMT 18 Feb 94)

Colosio on 18 February met with small scale entrepreneurs of Mexico City and offered them a nine-point plan that will promote associations, training programs, loan programs, and tax programs. (Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0435 GMT 19 Feb 94)

National Action Party, PAN, presidential candidate Diego Fernandez visited Toluca and met with Mexico State businessmen. Fernandez told them that "with or without changes to the Electoral Law, the 21 August elections will be clean elections." He added that he is opposed to the "coalitions that parties such as the Party of the Democratic Revolution, PRD, are trying to make." (Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0435 GMT 18 Feb 94)

Fernandez also visited Veracruz and clarified that the government must comply with the law, but candidates and the political parties must also be serious and honest if Mexico is to have clean elections. (Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0435 GMT 19 Feb 94)

PRD presidential candidate Cuauhtemoc Cardenas visited Durango State where he held a news conference with the local media to reiterate his request "for an extraordinary meeting of the Congress of the Union to make changes to the Electoral Law." Cardenas also said that he would like to meet with PRI presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio and "define the necessary measures for changes to the Electoral Law and to discuss the Chiapas armed conflict." (Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0435 GMT 18 Feb 94)

Cardenas also attended a rally in the Durango main plaza and spoke of the struggle "to seek a democratic change in the nation." As part of his program, he proposed the "economic recovery of the country." (Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0435 GMT 19 Feb 94)

Rafael Aguilar, presidential candidate for the Cardenist Front for National Reconstruction Party, PFCRN, visited Tlaxcala State on 17 February. Aguilar said that his party is undergoing "a process of tripling its forces, and this proves that by April it will have reached its goal of signing up 1 million members." (Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0435 GMT 18 Feb 94)

In Veracruz, Aguilar pointed out that the elections are the only path for obtaining the democratic change all Mexicans need. In a news conference, the PFCRN candidate stated all presidential candidates seek honest and clean elections. (Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0435 GMT 19 Feb 94)

Alvaro Perez Trevino, presidential candidate of the Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution, PARM, met with party members in Naucalpan. Perez said that "to combat voting abstentions, it is necessary to encourage women and youths to vote since they represent 70 percent of the country's population." (Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0435 GMT 18 Feb 94)

Pablo Emilio Madero, National Opposition Union, UNO, presidential candidate, visited Michoacan State where he met with reporters. Madero stressed the importance of clean elections that "will serve as an example for future elections." (Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0435 GMT 18 Feb 94)

Mexican Green Ecologist Party presidential candidate Jorge Gonzalez Torres has visited Michoacan State where he met with professors who are on strike at the local university. (Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0435 GMT 18 Feb 94)

While in Mexico City, Gonzalez Torres accepted an invitation to attend the Chiapas peace dialogue as an observer at the invitation of the peace commission and the mediator. (Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0435 GMT 19 Feb 94)

The weekly magazine ESTE PAIS on 18 February reported on a poll conducted in Mexico City, Monterrey, Guadalajara, Tijuana, and Merida on 11 February. The poll showed that 35 percent of the people do not know for whom they are going to vote, 33 percent said they will vote for Colosio, 17 percent will vote for Fernandez, and 14 percent will vote for Cardenas. Meanwhile, 40 percent of those polled said they do not believe their votes will be respected. (Mexico City Radio ACIR Network in Spanish 0030 GMT 19 Feb 94)

Correction to Poll on Voter Support for Colosio

PA2502165994

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "Poll Shows Increased Voter Support for PRI's Colosio," published in the 24 February Latin America DAILY REPORT, pages 11-12:

Page 12, paragraph 7, sentence three make read... fallen noticeably from 21 percent to 14... (correcting percent amount)

El Salvador

Government Uncovers Plan To Attack Political Leaders

PA2602042794 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Report by William Melendez from the "Up to Date" newscast]

[Text] Presidency Minister Oscar Santamaria has revealed the government has uncovered a plan to attack political leaders, as was disclosed yesterday by FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] leader Francisco Jovel. Minister Santamaria said the information available is still vague, but he added that those who might be targeted have already been alerted.

Minister Santamaria said the government abides by the principles of respecting human rights and rejecting violence, and, therefore, it is illogical to think any government official is involved in the recent attack against the bodyguards of FMLN candidate Nidia Diaz. Santamaria stressed that whenever the government has received information of this nature, it has warned those who might be targeted.

[Begin Santamaria recording] I believe no one could receive this kind of information without reporting it, because it would be tragic if anything happened to a person who could have been alerted. [end recording]

Santamaria said in light of the fact that the information received is sometimes sketchy, it is difficult to arrest the people reportedly involved in plans to attack political figures.

[Begin Santamaria recording] When a person is arrested, the arrest has to be based on evidence and not on simple information that cannot be used as a basis for detention. In addition, we have taken other measures. [end recording]

According to Santamaria, whenever the FMLN has asked for assistance from government organizations, it has received assistance without any problems. He recalled that the Investigations Division of the National Civilian Police is investigating the attack on Nidia Diaz's bodyguards.

Unity Movement Candidate Criticizes Onusal's Assessment

PA2702161494 San Salvador Radio Farabundo Marti Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 23 Feb 94

[Report by Imelda Alverenga; from the "Facing the Moment" newscast]

[Text] Jorge Martinez, Unity Movement presidential candidate, expressed disagreement on Wednesday with the Onusal [UN Observer Mission in El Salvador] Electoral Division's assessment that the Supreme Electoral Tribunal [TSE] registry is satisfactory. The Electoral Division's second report terms as satisfactory the voter registry even though approximately 60,000 persons will not be able to vote for lack of a voter identification card.

[Begin Martinez recording] We consider the TSE's response to be insufficient. Too many people have been left without their voter identification cards. Tens of thousands of people who are registered to vote have been denied the right to be told why they will not get their voter identification cards. They are simply not given one. It is also said a large number of citizens requested their voter identification cards but their data was lost in the computers' memories. We believe things could have been improved. [end recording]

Furthermore, the Unity Movement candidate criticized ARENA [Nationalist Republican Alliance] for using state resources in its campaign. [Begin Martinez recording] The media has been invaded by the government with a shameless electoral publicity in favor of ARENA. In fact, state-owned presses, like the one at the National Geographic Institute, have been printing political propaganda for ARENA. This has been reported by the workers. [end recording]

Finally, Jorge Martinez announced that municipal government plans are being discussed with different candidates throughout the country. Martinez said his party's main strategy will be to sponsor the citizens' participation through open town council meetings.

Prison Riot Results in Nine Inmate Deaths

PA2602141794 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1441 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] San Salvador, 25 Feb (DPA)—Nine inmates have died as the result of a prison riot in El Salvador, the Justice Ministry officially reported today.

The riot took place in Penitenciaria de Occidente, located in Santa Ana, 68 km west of San Salvador. The commotion among the inmates broke out Wednesday night with two dead initially. The situation was aggravated yesterday morning when the resident inmates rejected the presence of others who had been transferred from Gotera Prison in the east, where they had participated in a massacre last November.

It was reported that the Occidente inmates demanded the retransfer of the rioters, who caused the deaths of two of their group on Wednesday night. After the riot ended last night with the mediation of the UN Observer Mission in El Salvador, Onusal, prison system director Rodolfo Garay Pineda reported nine dead, six of whom had been beheaded by the old Santa Ana inmates.

The riot concluded after negotiations were held to retransfer the dangerous inmates and after inmate committees cooperated by agreeing to surrender the knives and ice picks used in the riot.

Roundup of Electoral Developments

PA2502162394

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on developments related to the Salvadoran elections, scheduled for 20 March 1994. Dr. Ruben Zamora, presidential candidate for the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front-Democratic Convergence-National Revolutionary Movement, FMLN-CD-MNR, coalition, said in a speech to the Salvadoran Chamber of Construction Industry that the country needs a policy to give every Salvadoran a dignified home. "We believe more emphasis should be placed on providing the necessary funds for low-cost homes," he said. (San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 16 Feb 94)

Zamora said the government's indifference toward the investigation of corruption cases proves its complicity. He said the government "is guilty of a cover-up in connection with all these cases" because "the committee appointed to investigate" the cases did nothing. Zamora said the U.S. Congress decision to freeze $20 million in aid is a result of the current Salvadoran Government's failure to investigate the cases and punish the culprits. (San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 23 Feb 94)

The FMLN Womens Group on 23 February presented their platform to the leftist coalition, demanding greater participation in the party and the government, free health care and education, and equal pay for equal work. The women proposed the creation of a women's ministry to protect women's interests. (San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 24 Feb 94)

All the presidential candidates' platforms include promises to solve weter, health, education, crime, and economic problems. Nationalist Republican Alliance, Arena, candidate Armando Calderon Sol stressed the peace achieved by the Cristiani Government will be consolidated when his ticket is elected. Christian Democratic Party, PDC, candidate Fidel Chavez Mena said he will change the direction of the economy, freeze prices, and eliminate the Value Added Tax. FMLN-CD-MNR coalition candidate Ruben Zamora said farmers will have access to credit, all the villages will have potable water, crime will be controlled, and the government will fight corruption. National Conciliation Party, PCN, candidate Roberto Escobar Garcia claimed the most important projects were carried out during the PCN administration; adding the same will be done during his administration. National Solidarity Movement candidate Edgardo Rodriguez Engelhardt said he supports a decentralized government with more local autonomy. (San Salvador LA PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish 21 Feb 94 p 3)

Approximately 26,000 demobilized Armed Forces members threatened to obstruct the upcoming elections if a series of irregularities concerning the payment of their compensations is not corrected soon. They claimed the government played a dirty trick because their documents state they have abandoned their posts. This has caused great discontent among the demobilized men, who are prepared to take up arms again and fight for their rights. (San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 24 Feb 94)

The UN Observers for El Salvador, Onusal, reported today 400,000 Salvadoran citizens will not vote in the 20 March elections although their names appear on the electoral lists. Supreme Electoral Tribunal President Luis Zaldivar questioned the veracity of the report because, in his opinion, no one can predict how many people will vote in the next general elections. The voters' registration list shows 2.7 million people are registered to vote, but the Onusal report said the list should have been purged because it includes people who live abroad and others who never showed up to claim their electoral card. (San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 24 Feb 94)

Guatemala

Plot To Force President's Resignation Disclosed

PA2502221394 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2037 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Guatemala City, 25 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—Guatemalan President Ramiro de Leon Carpio and the Armed Forces recently managed to control an alleged plot planned by soldiers and civilians to force the head of state's resignation, the magazine CRONICA reported today.

According to CRONICA, which cited military sources, Fernando Andrade, former foreign minister during the military government headed by Oscar Mejia (1983-86) was the one who tried to force the president's resignation so that Vice President Arturo Herbruger, for whom he worked as adviser until a few days ago, could assume the post. The report added that Andrade's intention was promoting Herbruger's enthronement and then having Congress declare him incapacitated in order to leave the Presidency vacant.

According to the sources, members of the Armed Forces knew about the alleged plot since October. The report added that Andrade contacted General Jose Luis Quilo Ayuso, who was removed from his post as national defense chief of staff on 18 February; former President Vinicio Cerezo (1986-91); and Central American Parliament Deputy Danilo Roca, the lawyer who represents the soldiers who tried to overthrow Cerezo.

Military Intelligence learned about the plan, as well as Israeli and U.S. diplomats, who alerted President De Leon of a possible attack against him.

Nevertheless, Andrade, former foreign minister (1983-86) and former ambassador to the OAS and the United Nations, today denied any participation in the alleged plot, stating that he presented his resignation to Herbruger in December, but it was not accepted until

February. "I find those rumors very funny," Andrade said, dismissing the possibility that his resignation was due to his presumed implication in the plot.

Roca, a member of the Union of the National Center (UCN), also denied the allegations, saying that "the soldiers I represent were discharged." "Should I get involved in something like this, you will see me at the National Palace, and not talking about an aborted coup," Roca stressed.

Meanwhile, during a ceremony also attended by President De Leon, Gen. Quilo Ayuso today denied any links to any "conspiracy" as "some people are cynically saying." With regard to rumors about coups d'etat, President De Leon has constantly said that they are "just rumors," and that the changes he made in the Army on 18 February had nothing to do with presumed movements of that nature. "It is said that some people with coupist intentions have participated in those activities and that there have been meetings among them, but there is no evidence," President De Leon said.

De Leon on Resignation Rumors, Human Rights

PA2802043494 Guatemala City Teleonce Television in Spanish 1900 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Interview with President Ramiro De Leon Carpio by unidentified reporter at the farewell ceremony for General Jose Luis Quilo Ayuso, former chief of the general staff of national defense, at the former Polytechnic School in Guatemala City on 25 February; broadcast in progress—live or recorded]

[Text] [De Leon]...bureaucrats for a 40-percent increase when 8 million Guatemalans have no job, nothing to eat, no health care, and no education. That is why I listen to the Guatemalan people. With the law in our hands, we are going to continue working.

[Reporter] You said on one occasion that you were being pressured into resigning?

[De Leon] No, no, no, I have never been pressured. I sometimes have high blood pressure because of all the obstacles I must face. There is no pressure. I cannot resign. How could I resign a popular mandate? How would I stand? I have a huge challenge ahead. I do not think it would be wrong for me to say that I have been the Guatemalan president who came to the presidency under the worst conditions in the country's history, facing huge challenges, an economic crisis, and a political crisis that we are now overcoming. We have also faced a social crisis. I boarded a ship sailing rough waters in the middle of a hurricane. We are now sailing away from the hurricane, and I have to turn it over to my successor in peaceful waters or at a safe port.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[De Leon] We are doing well at the international level. They are aware of our efforts. They are aware of the political commitment of the president and my administration. In that regard, it is logical for this to happen. If the human rights situation deteriorated, it would be logical for them to think that way. We are going to wait for the Geneva resolution.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[De Leon] I prefer not to comment. Draw your own conclusions.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] as for human rights violations reported in Mexico [words indistinct].

[De Leon] Many things are said abroad. I would like them to say those things here in Guatemala. Here is where we have to rebuild Guatemala. Here is where we have to build peace. It is not going to be done outside Guatemala. Those who are here, those of us who have suffered the consequences of the armed confrontation that has lasted over 30 years, we are the ones who must truly assume that responsibility, and we have assumed it. To be saying in Mexico that we are violating human rights....[pauses] We must ask these people if they know where Santiago Atitlan is. We must ask them how many years it has been since they were here. I do not know, they may have been here before but under different circumstances. Thank you.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[De Leon] We have already begun paying state workers according to the schedule. Of course we are not going to pay those who were involved in the (?strike), and there is proof of that.

Interview with Defense Minister Henriquez

PA2502132694 Guatemala City Teleonce Television in Spanish 1900 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Interview with Guatemalan Defense Minister General Mario Rene Enriquez Morales by unidentified reporters on 22 February; place not given; from the "Telepress" newscast—recorded]

[Text] On 22 February, Defense Minister General Mario Enriquez Morales stated he would defend, with his own life, constitutional order, and expressed his belief that there are people interested in disrupting the country's institutions. Enriquez Morales made this statement when asked about the recent changes in the so-called security cabinet, particularly the high-ranking military positions.

[Enriquez] I believe the changes in the Army, as rightly said by Gen. Gonzalez Paracena on the commemoration of Tecun Uman's Day, are routine and we should get used to changes of that sort. Normally, posts are rotated and changes made each month. When these changes are implemented at a higher level, however, there is always some apprehension. I can tell you, however, that there is nothing extraordinary about these changes, which seek to strengthen the Army as an institution.

[Reporter] Are destabilization attempts the cause for these changes?

[Enriquez] The truth is we have been hearing rumors of a coup d'etat, destabilization, instability, and ungovernability for a long time. It seems to me that some people, individually or as a sector, would be pleased if the constitutional order were broken. As the defense minister, I want to let everyone know that I would defend the constitutional order with my own life if necessary. In addition, the officers of the Guatemalan Army are already very aware that one of their main roles is to preserve the constitutional order. I do not want to mention the 25 May and 1 June events again, but they truly exemplify the Army's new attitude.

I have also said the democratic process will not be consolidated by imposing a dictatorship in Guatemala, which is what many might want. A democratic system may not be perfect, but it has been proven to be the best system. The problem is that we have not learned yet to live in a democracy. Sometimes, we confuse democracy with excess freedom. The reason there are protests by many sectors of the population is because we demand only rights and forget our obligations.

[Reporter] What are [words indistinct] that the president mentioned, such as [word indistinct] the country's institutions, strengthen the Army's unity, and he also mentioned kidnappings?

[Enriquez] I have told you that we must strengthen the institutions, and the president, with every reason, has been very concerned with the inefficiency of the work done by the security cabinet. A case in point is the resignation of Government Minister Ortiz Moscoso, to whom I send my regards and respect. He is a very good and kind person.

It seems there was somewhat of a lack of coordination which hurt the security the state must provide its citizens. You are aware that the rate of kidnappings has increased abruptly, many estates have been invaded and war taxes imposed. In addition, some social sectors of the country have suffered disappointments and been disillusioned when they saw that the state's response did not conform with their expectations or has not been the appropriate response. As a result, the president must make his decisions, which, although political in nature, benefit the population in general.

[Reporter] Did this lack of coordination you mentioned take place in the National Defense General Staff?

[Enriquez] No, it occurred in the security cabinet. I believe there was somewhat of a lack of coordination between the security forces and the Government Ministry, which affected the security cabinet. This was not the reason for General Quilo's removal however.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Enriquez] Gen. Quilo is retiring. He will have his farewell party and leave with all the honors. I believe the president's decision regarding the removal of Gen. Quilo is reasonable. Gen. Quilo is a very good friend of mine.

[Reporter] Would you recommend a military member for the Government Ministry?

[Enriquez] I believe any citizen who is capable of fulfilling the duties of that position would be eligible. The candidate must also inspire security given the current situation of uneasiness and disquiet that stems mainly from the high crime rates in Guatemala. That a military member might become president is not so farfetched because it is the right of any citizen. It could be a military member who has retired or resigned, or it could be a civilian, which is what I tend to believe the most probable.

[Reporter] Could the Army propose a candidate?

[Gen. Enriquez] The Army should not recommend candidates for civilian positions. I believe the Army would be wrong to recommend anyone to the president because he already knows many people who can cooperate with him. If at any time, however, the president asks for advice, we would be willing to comply in a very institutional manner.

[Reporter] What is your opinion on the article published in THE MIAMI HERALD, which argues that the president and the Army are very close?

[Enriquez] You must see that they have always said that. You must recall that former President Vinicio Cerezo, in his campaign, used to say the Army should return to its barracks, and after his victory, Cerezo was accused of being too close to the Army. This should not surprise anyone. The Army is a disciplined and obedient institution. Once one becomes familiar with the Army, one gives it the credibility and the respect it deserves for its loyalty to the institutions, the president, and the entire democratic system it defends. I repeat, we still have a long way to go to consolidate our democracy.

[Reporter] Reports have said the Army was going to cooperate in the investigation of some kidnappings. Are there any clues so far; what investigations have been conducted?

[Enriquez] I believe the Army is cooperating through the Intelligence Directorate, and it is participating in joint actions with this purpose in mind, specifically in the case of Jorge Carpio Nicolle, although we have many problems in Guatemala such as kidnappings, war taxes, estates invasions, and robberies.

This case, however, is special and has caused a stir worldwide because it involved Carpio Nicolle, who was not only a professional but also a former presidential candidate, and the owner of EL GRAFICO newspaper. All cases are dealt with in the same manner, but regarding this particular case, I believe the president's decision to appoint representatives from various sectors to investigate this crime is the right one. [end recording]

De Leon on New Government Minister, Fuel Prices, Hospitals

PA2502014794 Guatemala City Teleonce Television in Spanish 1900 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Report on news conference by Guatemalan President Ramiro de Leon Carpio with unidentified reporters at the National Palace in Guatemala City on 22 February; from the "Telepress" newscast—recorded]

[Text] In a statement to reporters at the National Palace on 22 February, President Ramiro de Leon Carpio commented on the variations in fuel prices. He initially answered questions from reporters who asked him about the appointment of a new government minister after accepting current Minister Arnoldo Ortiz Moscoso 's resignation this week. De Leon said he has not yet decided who will be the new government minister.

[Begin recording] [De Leon] I do not know yet.

[Reporter] When will the announcement be made?

[De Leon] When I have the name. I have not decided yet.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[De Leon] Yes, of course he will assume his post at that time, but I still do not know.

[Reporter] Any candidates?

[De Leon] No, not yet.

[Reporter] What will be the basis for selection?

[De Leon] The president will make the decision based on the requirements, qualifications, personal qualities, and so forth.

[Reporter] Will he be another civilian?

[De Leon] We still do not know.

[Reporter] What are your comments on the article published by THE MIAMI HERALD and the current situation of nongovernability?

[De Leon] I would like to refer to a commentary written by one of your colleagues, which was published today, in the sense that sometimes a foreign reporter visits our country for a few minutes and then believes he is an expert in our national affairs. Carlos Rafael Soto said this, not me. This is what he said in his column today.

I believe we can handle our internal affairs better, more knowledgeably. The article stated I depend on the Army and that the Army is pressuring me. Maybe we should inform the person who wrote the article about the changes we made on 18 February, so he can see differently. I am not concerned about the article, because I feel it is not consonant with reality.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] at the international level?

[De Leon] None at all.

[Reporter] What would be the impact of an increase in the price of diesel?

[De Leon] I am pleased to say a few days ago I was criticized when I said I would not increase the price of gasoline and that instead it was possible the price of the two types of gasoline would drop. Based on the economic theory of free supply and demand and free market, I then said we had to wait. Today, 10 or 12 days later, what I said is right. I did not lie. I said the price of gasoline would drop.

It is significant that gas stations that did not increase the price of gasoline by 10 cents possibly doubled their sales, according to statistics. The economic theory did work. Concerning diesel, what happened was logical; nevertheless, as I said, this compensates for the lower prices in the two types of gasoline. Prices have dropped considerably, 30 or 40 cents. I did not lie; on the contrary, I told the truth. Liberalizing the price of fuel can benefit consumers at a given time, once the market reaches its natural levels.

[Reporter] Certain private hospitals have offered their assistance due to the public hospitals strike. Will you accept that proposal? Could the military hospital also help?

[De Leon] Any type of assistance is welcome, especially when the people's human rights are being violated, in this case, the human right to health, which the Constitution guarantees. Those who earn a salary to give medical attention—sometimes deficiently due to lack of funds, medicines, and proper conditions—are giving an even more deficient service today. We do not know if this can be called a service when there is an illegal strike, a totally illegal strike; hence, in addition to the disciplinary actions, the administrative, and legal actions we are conducting, naturally any assistance is welcome. If doctors and paramedics in private hospitals are willing to reduce the harm being done to the Guatemalan people, I welcome their assistance. I respect them, because they are honoring their Hippocratic oath, showing their humanitarian spirit; they deserve praise and recognition.

Nevertheless, we must act. I met with members of the Association of Hospital Directors yesterday and will continue to meet with them in an attempt to find medium- and long-term solutions. One of those solutions is having family foundations [patronatos familiares] take care of the direction and administration of hospitals in the future. There are already very good examples of how this can work.

We will expedite the procedures for approximately 100 or 120 foundations that have already requested their registration and recognition of their legal status. In the future, this will result in the decentralization of administrative functions, and this type of problem will be solved via social participation and supervision. For this to happen we must first take care of certain administrative aspects. In the meantime, we will try to resolve certain financial problems, but the administrative aspect and handling of hospitals is a different problem.

[Reporter] [Words indistinct]

[De Leon] I have not thought of that yet, but as I said, any assistance is welcome. If this is possible, if the military hospital and the doctors of the military hospital can help, we would use those services. [end recording]

Government Rejects Belizean 'Ultimatum' to Border Residents

PA2702223594 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1823 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Text] Guatemala City, 27 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—The Guatemalan Government and Army today rejected the "ultimatum" given by the Belizean authorities to 18 Guatemalan families who have been ordered to withdraw from lands they are occupying.

According to the Belizean Embassy, the peasants, who have established themselves in the "Chiquibul" national park, have been given 15 days to clear the area with a deadline that expires on 10 March.

Guatemalan Foreign Minister Maritza Ruiz said Guatemala does not acknowledge the Belizean Government's authority to give alleged "ultimatums" to Guatemalan families living in border areas.

Guatemalan Defense Minister General Mario Rene Enriquez asserted that the Army will not tolerate any "meddling" on Belize's part in Guatemala's national sovereignty, much less the "intimidation" of Guatemalan citizens.

Enriquez added that the Belizean authorities are "being unreasonable" and that they cannot set deadlines for families to abandon the area in question because Guatemala still disputes ownership of that territory.

Belize gained its independence from Great Britain in September 1981, and the administration of deposed Guatemalan President Jorge Serrano (1991-1993) recognized it as a state. However, Guatemala has maintained its claim on the region for over a century and a half.

The defense minister said the Army is prepared to support the Guatemalan families living in the "Chiquibul" national park, where they have built their homes. Enriquez dismissed the possibility of clashes with Belizean soldiers.

Armed Forces Support Civilian Defense Patrols

PA2802040794 Guatemala City PRENSA LIBRE in Spanish 25 Feb 94 p 2

[Text] Major Edith Vargas de Marroquin, Armed Forces spokesperson, said the Army respects but does not share the opinion of Human Rights Ombudsman Jorge Mario Garcia Laguardia regarding the need to repeal Decree Law 19-86, which recognizes the existence of the Civilian Self-Defense Patrols (PAC).

Vargas reaffirmed that the PAC have spearheaded counterinsurgency activity in the countryside. In this context, the existence of the PAC is fully justified, not only for that reason but also because they provide security for the inhabitants.

She explained that in areas where there is no guerrilla threat, the PAC are becoming Peace and Development Committees. These committees help bring progress to their communities.

Vargas admitted that some patrol members have committed human rights violations, as Garcia Laguardia had previously stated. She said, however, that such cases have been put in the hands of the law.

The military spokesperson reaffirmed that there is no obligation to participate in the PAC. She said the document filed by the human rights ombudsman at the National Congress requesting the repeal of this decree-law should be examined under the same light in which the decree itself was originally issued.

Honduras

President Reina Holds News Conference

PA2502155094 Tegucigalpa Voz de Honduras Network in Spanish 1627 GMT 23 Feb 94

[News conference by Honduran President Carlos Reina with unidentified reporters at the Government House in Tegucigalpa on 23 February; monitored in progress—live]

[Excerpts] [Reina] The international community has questioned me a great deal about the Palmerola situation. This is a very sensitive issue, particularly in the international context. [words indistinct] In my opinion, the Palmerola base resulted from an military agreement [words indistinct] It is not a formal treaty; it was not submitted to the National Congress. Based on this agreement, [words indistinct] it was theoretically established that it was a [words indistinct] base.

The Cold War has ended. What happens to this installation? Can it be utilized—with international cooperation—for the benefit of the Honduran people and the United States? Can it be used to combat such a threatening and damaging scourge as drug trafficking? Can it be used for [words indistinct] ecology, or to help control disease, or to improve the transfer of technology in the agriculture sector, or to help in the health sector? All of this will have to be discussed in due time at the National Congress. The National Congress will decide this. I will even go further. We could ask the people of Comayagua, who are directly affected, what they think about the presence of the installation there. I strenuously opposed war activities there, as they only bring us destruction. [passage omitted]

We are talking about privatization in general, not about one particular company. The simplest example would be [words indistinct]. This was taboo some time ago, one could not talk about this. I am very happy that currently we can talk about the privatization of a hotel or of any other institution. The privatization issue is neither good or bad in itself. It all depends on what is being privatized and how it is being privatized as this can lead to widespread corruption or it can serve to help Honduras' economic independence. In this way, we would not have to face situations arising from the payment of the foreign debt. A total of 43 percent of the Honduran budget is used to pay the foreign debt. If we add what goes to pay bureaucracy to this, we are facing a truly dramatic situation. Some institutions have told me that almost 90 percent of their budget is used to pay for administration. After that, what is left for the institution's goals? What I want to tell you is that we have not discussed [word indistinct] appears in the press; we have not started to discuss this. Nevertheless, we have initiated discussions on Hondutel [Honduran Telecommunications Enterprise]. This has an even more profound effect on Honduran economy.

[Unidentified reporter] On the Palmerola issue, can you give us more details. Will your government send the foreign troops, the American troops, deployed there away, or are they going to stay?

[Reina] [words indistinct] is still pending, but I can give you some hints. I believe we should see if it is good for Honduras—taking into account international cooperation—to maintain the installations. We must take into account 1) this is a Honduran base; 2) the arguments for and against this installation will be discussed at the National Congress, and 3) the people must be directly asked what is their opinion on this matter. The international context changed from a Cold War to an agenda of international cooperation.

As far as Hondutel is concerned, there are two firm proposals. One is from [name indistinct], which was published in the press. I believe it is very attractive and very [word indistinct] proposal. Why this? Well, because there is a way to take advantage of these [words indistinct] and to become more efficient as an institution.

[Reporter] Have the Armed Forces begun the debate on privatization?

[Reina] This all depends on whether we are convinced it is good for Honduras. In any case, I have firmly committed that if it is done it will be because it is good for Honduras, its economy, and the future of its people. It will be done with the utmost honesty, [words indistinct], controlled, reviewed, supervised, so there is not the slightest doubt of a dirty deal behind the privatization. [passage omitted]

What we have to do is present a proposal and discuss it with the Armed forces and the other institutions. This proposal has three options: 1) there will be no more forced recruitment; 2) the Armed Forces has a proposal on the selection of members of this armed institution; and 3) our proposal that recruitment be on a volunteer-educational basis. This can be included and should be included in our proposal to the legislative assembly.

As far as Palmerola is concerned, within the context of the Cold War, it is a human tragedy that has lasted for almost half a century, from 1945 post war, to 1989, 1990, 1991, depending on the region where world tensions were being eliminated. There are people who still have the Cold War mind-set; they would like those tensions and ideological confrontations to return. This must be discussed in depth and light must be shed on the Palmerola issue.

This is the result of extending an agreement not a treaty. The difference between an agreement and a treaty, for those who are not lawyers, is that an agreement does not have to be submitted to Congress while a treaty needs to be submitted to Congress. Everything relating to military matters should be submitted to Congress. During that time, however, we were involved in a national security situation. Those were very difficult times for Honduras, the hemisphere, and humanity. There was an arms race going on that was going to become the War of the Galaxy. That is why we firmly opposed this because Honduras was going to be the scene of a world war.

Having overcome this, the discussion must center on whether international cooperation and collaboration can help us accomplish the points of the new agenda. What are these points? Human rights, ecology, drug trafficking, fighting poverty, and the improvement of justice. This is what we must discuss. We must no longer talk about who is or is not a communist, which was a common topic within the context of the Cold War. If this can be done and be discussed in-depth at Congress, the decision regarding such installations will come from here. [passage omitted]

[Reporter Diaz] [words indistinct] to improve the country's economic situation by reducing the fiscal deficit. Aside from the talks on the privatization of some enterprises and taking into account that 90 percent of the budget of different institutions is used to pay personnel, could your administration—as other governments have promised to do many times—reduce state bureaucracy?

[Reina] Miss Edith Diaz, Mr. Jaime Rosenthal said in his letter issued the day before yesterday that the problem is not the fiscal deficit per se, which is very appropriate. He said the problem is the deficit with the balance of payments, namely the commercial balance. He indicated that we do not export enough; we import more than we export, thereby incurring deficits. Consequently, we must produce more to be able to export more. I think he is saying the right thing.

But your question centers more on how and when the fiscal deficit will be cut. When we talk about Hondutel, it is precisely for that purpose. Petrodollars came and these countries got irresponsibly into debt. Now 43 percent of the budget goes to pay this debt, while another large percentage is used to pay state employees. There is no money left for the development of the country. How can we advance like this? Where did the borrowed money go to? How was it spent? How was it invested?

To reduce state bureaucracy, one must know how we received the country in January 1994 and take measures to cleanse the economy. This begins by fighting corruption. To reduce the government, the problem is sometimes how to compensate people employed by the government. For example, these people's salaries were increased so they would have larger benefits. I have asked if we must eliminate excess personnel? I was told yes, but we must pay so many millions in severance pay. This is a straitjacket for the government. What do we do? Do we break the law and not compensate them? Do we go further into debt to pay the compensations? Do we leave officials in office who do not have any duties? Do not go into politics because this is very difficult. It is not easy to resolve these problems, but we are going to face them. We must overcome... [pauses] because these situations can be overcome. A government team with good intentions, courage, determination, a team of the best men can do so. [passage omitted]

Discua: All-Volunteer Military Service Not Feasible

PA2602233294 San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish 23 Feb 94 p 4

[Text] General Luis Alonso Discua Elvir, Armed Forces commander in chief, yesterday hinted that he is trying to help President Carlos Roberto Reina so he does not fall short on his campaign promise to eliminate obligatory military service.

During an interview following a meeting at the Foreign Relations Ministry, the general said that a "mixed" volunteer military service is being studied under which some "would be obliged" to serve.

Discua Elvir said he met with the president on Monday to analyze the last proposal that he, as commander in chief, presented on 10 February to establish "constitutional military service."

The general said he is waiting for the government's response to this proposal because "the president's political objective is to solve this issue, which has been a problem for the Armed Forces, the government, and the Honduran people. We hope there is a desire to recruit soldiers in a more humane manner."

Immediately after the meeting, the commander in chief was asked if military service would remain obligatory. He replied: "We have neither the economic nor cultural capacity for an all-volunteer military service."

Discua Elvir said only four nations in the world have volunteer military services. "We want to have a mixed military service in which there are both volunteers and those who will be obligated to serve," he noted.

The general added: "We are trying to organize a mixed military service because a volunteer service is very expensive. Even if we reduced the number of personnel to a quarter of its present size, the Armed Forces budget would triple."

Discua was then reminded that the Armed Forces is contradicting President Carlos Roberto Reina's campaign promise to have a "volunteer and educational military service."

"I am afraid that at that time the president did not have advisers. Sometimes advice is not correct; maybe that was the case. Nevertheless, the president is doing everything possible. He must be given time. He definitely wants to keep his promise, and we—who must help with ideas—are cooperating as much as possible so he can find a solution to keep his promise."

The general insisted that the new recruitment system will not discriminate and include only the sons of the poor. He explained that other options, such as students serving on weekends, are being studied.

We are trying to do this "in an acceptable manner" so those who want to remain in the battalions can choose technical careers or receive special training as forest rangers, mechanics, and so forth. This would also include social services such as painting schools, sweeping streets, and other activities, he noted.

Discua Elvir indicated that a plan will be coordinated with Education Minister Zenobia Rodas whereby all officers will help teach illiterate residents living around the battalions—to be identified by a census—to read and write.

Land Litigations Involving U.S. Citizens Viewed

PA2402220394 San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish 24 Feb 94 p9

[Commentary by Gautama Fonseca: "The North Americans and Our Right"]

[Text] The media have been reporting several land ownership litigations involving U.S. citizens are being heard in our national courts.

They have also disclosed the U.S. Embassy in Honduras released a note on 18 February stating "a delegation consisting of two personnel of the U.S. Senate" are visiting our country to learn about the cases in question.

The same media also reported Senator Jesse Helms is sponsoring amendments to the internal legislation of his country "to exclude from foreign aid any state that 1) Has prior to, during, or after the amendment: a) Nationalized or expropriated any property that belongs to a U.S. citizen; b) Relinquished or annulled any contract or agreement with a U.S. citizen; or c) Taken any other action (such as levying discriminatory taxes or others) aimed at seizing or controlling property of a U.S. citizen.

2) Has failed to give adequate and effective compensation for the property within a three-year period. Such a compensation must be effected in convertible currency equivalent to the total value of the property as required by international law."

Disregarding the peculiar language of the translation, it seems to us our government must carefully study this type of news, because they do not necessarily agree with that that is stated in our Constitution or with the rules of Public International Law or Private International Law which we have to follow.

It is a known fact to everyone that Article 30 of the Constitution states "Foreigners must respect authorities and abide by the law from the moment they enter national territory." Article 33 establishes that "Foreigners cannot lodge a complaint or demand compensation from the state in any other way or case that Hondurans can."

It also stipulates foreigners "will not resort to diplomatic channels except when justice is denied (and that) to that effect, the fact a sentence is not favorable to the person filing the complaint will not be seen as a denial of justice. Anyone violating these regulations will no longer be authorized to live in the country."

Although it is no secret the United States is a superpower and as of today is the number one nation on earth, this does not mean, if it wants to act according to the law and morals, it should try to become sort of a comptroller supervising the legality of third states.

Therefore, to prevent unnecessary frictions and so relations between our country and the United States can develop within the framework of mutual respect, our Foreign Ministry must ensure that all U.S. citizens who come in contact with our country memorize those two articles of our Constitution.

The U.S. Embassy, on the other hand, should help in carrying out this task for reasons that obviously need not be mentioned.

Nicaragua

National Assembly Approves Two Constitutional Amendments

PA2502162994 Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 24 Feb 94 p 8

[Report by Edgard Barberena]

[Excerpt] With 63 deputies voting, the National Assembly on 23 February eliminated the "second padlock" from the Constitution, which will make it possible before mid-year to approve partial amendments to the Constitution in one round of debates

The historical step was taken by the deputies of the Center Bloc (BC), Christian Democratic Union (UDC), Unity and Reconciliation (BUR), the Sandinist bloc, the legislative group of the Conservative Popular Alliance (APC), and the Social Democratic bloc comprised of representatives from the MDN [Nicaraguan Democratic Movement] and the PSD [Social Democratic Party].

The second debate followed the 60-percent procedure established by law. Therefore, President Violeta de Chamorro is expected to sanction the first amendments made to the Constitution since its promulgation on 10 January 1987.

Chamorro Cannot Exercise Veto

With regard to the constitutional amendments, President Chamorro has no veto authority, and if the Executive Branch does not veto the amendments within the 15 days stipulated by law, National Assembly President Luis Humberto Guzman must order its publication in the official gazette or any other media. [sentence as published]

The only ones who walked out during the voting were some UNO [National Opposition Union] deputies after Adolfo Garcia Esquivel delivered a confusing speech that no one understood announcing the withdrawal of the minority group they now have in the National Assembly.

First Modifications

The constitutional amendments approved on 23 February read as follows:

Article 192: "The bill on partial amendments must specify the titles, chapters, and articles to be amended, abrogated, or added and explain the reasons; it must be submitted to a special commission that will announce its decision within a period of 60 days. The bill on constitutional amendments will then be subject to the procedures established for the creation of laws."

Article 195: "Amendments to constitutional laws will be made in accordance with procedures established for partial amendments to the Constitution." [passage omitted]

Leaders of Indian Organization Attack FSLN Activists

PA2702003094 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1200 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Report by Jose Gart from the "Radio Events" newscast]

[Text] Yatama [Indian military organization] leaders attacked 50 FSLN activists following a rally to close an FSLN [Sandinist National Liberation Front] political campaign in Puerto Cabezas. FSLN candidate (Evelyn Watler) was beaten up, and a window in a station wagon owned by Victor Espinoza, FSLN political secretary in Puerto Cabezas, was smashed.

Brooklyn Rivera, YATAMA's top leader and currently director of INDERA [Nicaraguan Institute for the Development of the Autonomous Regions of the Atlantic Coast], headed the attack. Alfonso Smith, governor of the North Atlantic Autonomous Region, Kenneth Bush, the Government Ministry's delegate, and other YATAMA activists also lead the criminal action.

The FSLN issued a statement on Radio Caribe on the night of 23 February repudiating the attitude of the YATAMA leaders and urging authorities to restore order in the North Atlantic Autonomous Region.

Chamorro Speaks on Election Anniversary

PA2702193894 Managua Radio Networks in Spanish 1725 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Speech by Nicaraguan President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro to mark the fourth anniversary of her election victory, at the Municipal Stadium in Nueva Guinea—live]

[Text] Dr. Orlando Trejos Somarriba, Supreme Court chief justice; Father [words indistinct]; Father Pedro Rufian of Nueva Guinea; Nueva Guinea Mayor Orlando [name indistinct]; Mr. Sergio Caramagna, coordinator general of the CIAV [International Commission of Support and Verification]-OAS; Messrs. National Assembly Representatives; Mr. (Arsenio Mur), CEPAD [Evangelical Committee for Development Aid] delegate to Nueva Guinea; Mrs. Ada Luz Tablada, women's representative in Nueva Guinea; Mr. (Edwin Berberena); Commander Oscar; Mr. Aquilino Luis Robleto, president of the Development Centers; Messrs. Members of the diplomatic corps and international organizations who are with me; Messrs. Cabinet Members; residents of Nueva Guinea and of other municipalities who are here with me; Dear Nicaraguan people:

Thank you, friends of Nueva Guinea, for inviting me to share this important national celebration with you. We are gathered here today, 25 February 1994, happy and optimistic, to celebrate another year of my electoral victory, the victory of the Nicaraguan people who sought democracy, peace, progress, and the reconciliation of all Nicaraguans.

On 23 December 1989, during the electoral campaign, I visited Nueva Guinea and found that war, repression, and political persecution were assailing the region. I remember telling you that national sovereignty only exists where the people are sovereign, as reflected through free and honest elections. On that occasion, I also promised you that I would end the economic crisis and promote production in a country that was bankrupt both morally and economically.

You are aware that it has been difficult to face the historic challenge of rebuilding our economy from the ground up and rescuing our sacred democratic and moral values. I want to tell you that I will not rest until I turn over to the next Nicaraguan who succeeds me in the Presidency a country better than the one I received, a country where there is clear socioeconomic growth. Today we speak with pride in Nicaragua, from north to south and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, because we are people who are working to consolidate democracy, peace, and progress.

I want to commend our brothers on the Atlantic coast, who will hold elections for regional councilmen of the northern and southern Atlantic coastal regions on 27 February. Our Atlantic coast, full of ethnic and cultural values and natural resources, deserves to forge a promising future. All the coastal people who have the right to vote must now seize the opportunity to cast their votes and freely elect their representatives. This is a historic opportunity, because it is the first time elections will really be held in freedom and democracy on the Atlantic coast. From their public posts, the elected men and women must strive to manage rationally the autonomy of the Atlantic coast to benefit all coastal residents. I want to tell you that you will receive support from my administration, even with our current limitations.

This year we are going to begin repairing the Muy Muy-Puerto Cabezas road and the Puerto Cabezas-Waspam road. We are also going to rebuild the San Benito-Rama road. We will carry out the dredging projects and the intercostal canal projects in Bluefields, as well as the dredging of the international marine route. We will repair the Puerto Cabezas and Corn Island docks, as well as the Rama passenger dock and the Bluefields coastal traffic dock.

Nicaraguans; I have had to exercise patience, hold dialogues, and maintain maximum tolerance to carry out my national reconciliation policies. We gave armed groups opportunities to join our efforts to protect life and promote productive tasks in Nicaraguan society. The consequences of war, the destruction of the means of production, and the shortage of resources to deal with the demands of production and the creation of jobs caused some Nicaraguans to devote themselves to committing crimes and provoking uprisings. This must become a closed chapter in our fatherland's history. That type of behavior does not lead to anything good. Instead, it makes us poorer and impedes national and international investment, which is so very needed for our country's social and economic recovery.

My government will continue working to strengthen democracy and to consolidate economic and social progress. In this second stage of my administration, of my presidential mandate, we are reorganizing the nation with programs that are largely socially oriented and that will offer opportunities for work and production.

Never before in our history have the people, both directly and through intermediate organizations, been so [word indistinct] and participated as much in government decisions as they are doing now. The people's organization has been essential to my government program because it is the people, in constant communication with my government, who make this time of peace, reconciliation, and opportunities for all possible.

We are drawing up new programs which we will call Peace and Development for Nueva Segovia, Madrid, Esteli, Guaco, Jinotega, Matagalpa, and the central Zelaya departments. That is why I am sending able officials, as well as material and financial resources, to the areas of the country that deserve special attention. I am sending not only our own resources but also those of friendly countries and nongovernmental and international organizations which have not forsaken us. We will continue supporting the state's reforms through the decentralization of health services, education, [word indistinct], tax collection, protection of natural resources, as well as the development of each one of our communities through the citizens' participation.

This year, with our own resources and with help from friendly nations, we will develop more than 1,600 projects throughout the country from Guascala to San Juan del Norte and from Somotillo to Cardenas. With these project we will respond to the demands of citizens made through the municipalities. In 1994, the international year of the family, with UNICEF's support and in consultation with all the municipal governments, my administration's top priority will be to develop the Mayors' Friends and Defenders of Children program. The goal of this program is to reduce infant mortality, school dropouts, and malnutrition and to provide care for children in difficult circumstances. This Peace and Development program will focus on priorities of activating the productive capabilities in those regions to stimulate greater production and achieve better economic growth.

We will support production and the producers who meet their commitments with the banks with more credits in all the regions of Guaco, Chontales and Nueva Guinea. The National Bank will reserve 70 percent more credits for the upcoming agricultural season. My government will continue to support cattle raising as well as the production of ginger, green beans, and other products that you have harvested with so much success here. That is why the National Bank has earmarked more than 200 billion cordobas for producers who meet their commitments in this region.

Friends of Nueva Guinea, this territory was inhabited many years ago by men and women from different parts of our nation who with a great deal of effort formed an iron-clad union between man and the land.

Thanks to their devotion, farmers and their plots have become the true symbols of Nueva Guinea.

Nueva Guinea is a national example of determination, patriotism, organization, and progress. You have capably forged for yourselves a very secure future, and you have overcome obstacles to seeking rapprochement among yourselves by practicing reconciliation without giving in to partisan or ideological differences.

During my electoral campaign I promised to achieve peace and eliminate obligatory military service so that tranquility would be restored in each and every home, and I have fulfilled my promise. [applause]

Today we are living in peace. Our fellow Nicaraguans have resumed work on their land and are sources of joy and support for their homes. The demobilized resistance fighters and retired Army troops are the best example of reconciliation. The armed movements that existed in Nueva Guinea at the beginning of my term have been defeated thanks to the resolve of my government and the peace commissions in Nueva Guinea. This firm resolve has made my pledge and the hopes of the men and women of this lovely municipality come true.

In Nueva Guinea my government has invested in economic rehabilitation projects for the people affected by the war, the basic grain program, potable water service, 230 homes, a new telephone system, anti-cholera treatment, the construction of 600 latrines, and 4,750 desks for a total during my term in office of approximately 11 million cordobas.

In Muelle de los Bueyes we built a health center, rebuilt city hall, and built the small market for a total investment of 11,778 cordobas. In El Rama we built sidewalks, a dock at the port, and rebuilt the market for an investment of 70,000 cordobas. In El Almendro we built a bridge and a community center at a cost of 72,000 cordobas.

Over the past three years your municipalities have progressed significantly. I made an effort to fulfill my pledges to you, my dear friends, and I have accomplished that. I am grateful to the international organizations represented in Nueva Guinea for the valuable support they have given this municipality. I am especially grateful for the cooperation provided by Spain; our friends from Worldwide Aid [Auxilio Mundial]; the Governments of Italy, The Netherlands, and Sweden; and all the organizations that have worked in these four municipalities.

El Rama, Muelle de los Bueyes, El Almendro, and Nueva Guinea are sources of constant concern for me. I would like to do more for these municipalities and make their administration more effective and efficient so that the budget allotments assigned to them by my government will reach them on schedule. To this end I have decided to send a draft bill to the National Assembly whereby we can fulfill your request and your dream of creating a new department [applause] with these four municipalities, which will organize and execute programs for this rich area. I will await your suggestions to make a reality of this geopolitical division which, unquestionably, will help us strengthen the path toward progress in what will be Nicaragua's newest department. [applause]

For this reason, ever since political polarization occurred at the National Assembly, I spared no effort in attaining a minimum consensus among the deputies of the various parties so we could fulfill another of the pledges made during our campaign, to amend the Constitution. During the installation of the National Assembly's 10th session on 10 January, I said I endorsed the idea of partially amending the Constitution, that I followed carefully the debates of these amendments, and that, with due respect for the government branches' autonomy, my government will effectively contribute to enrich the nature of these reforms. I expect the Constitution amendments to benefit Nicaragua. Consequently, the Nicaraguan people should take advantage of this historic opportunity to attain unity around a constitution that can help us face big challenges and national problems in this decade and the next. The Nicaraguan people must rebuild the country and attain steady economic development, which will make it possible for us to make significant progress in the creation of jobs and reduction of extreme poverty.

Fellow Nicaraguans, we are facing big challenges which we will have to overcome realistically and patriotically, without populism or demagoguery. These problems include the war sequel, huge foreign debt, extremely low per capita income, high unemployment rate, conflicts and tasks related to property ownership, a marked deterioration of the infrastructure, ecology, and rapid population growth. Meeting these challenges requires a small yet strong and agile state, a state that can regulate, lead, and pave the way, a state that can offset, in favor of the poorest sector, the effects of any imbalances. We can only resolve these problems on a medium- term basis with the support of all social forces coalesced around shared national objectives.

We need a reformed constitution which can make it possible for us to advance in an orderly fashion toward a solution for the country's social and economic problems. Such a constitution can also reinforce the democratic process. For this reason, I have followed the situation very closely and talked with the political forces that have been debating several positions and proposals to reform our Constitution. To stimulate a national consensus on these reforms, I will send to the National Assembly in March a government proposal on the Constitution's reforms. This will not preclude a continued effort to reach an agreement among all political forces of the country. We must attain this consensus to enforce the reforms and their beneficial effect on the state's institutions. Because the proposed reforms could harm the state's organization, I am convinced that the proposal must of necessity rely on the approval of all state branches and be widely discussed with the country's other sectors. The constitutional principle of harmonious coordination of the Nicaraguan state's branches should find their highest expression in this constitutional reform process.

I am also making a great effort to fulfill another election promise. I promised that the Armed Forces would be of a professional nature and would not belong to any one political party. Despite the many difficulties that my government and the Army have experienced in the search for a consensus on the new military organization law over the past few years, I can say that disparagement, mistrust, and misunderstanding have been left behind.

The determination and devotion which we have all invested in this difficult task has led to this law, which renders it possible to establish a professional, party-free, small, and friendly Army which will work in harmony with civilian power. It will be the Army of all Nicaraguans that the great heroes of our fatherland dreamed of. [applause]

I hope that once we complete the necessary procedures for passage of the law this promise will promptly become a reality for the benefit of the entire Nicaraguan nation. The Nicaraguan people trust in God. We believe in peace, democracy, reconciliation, and progress. I believe in my people; I believe in you and I believe in Nicaragua. Therefore, I want you to know that Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, who is a friend to all of you and president of all Nicaraguans, will continue working during the rest of her presidential term to improve the living conditions of all her people.

As I also told you on 23 December 1989, instead of tiring we must have faith and enthusiasm to build a better Nicaragua, a peaceful Nicaragua, a land that will be very close to God, with a noble people who from day to day make an effort to establish the reign of social justice, peace, and progress in the land where they were born. Thank you to all of you, my dear friends. In a little while I will have a few more words for you. [applause]

I would like to inform all of you, my dear friends of Nueva Guinea and people of all the municipalities and throughout Nicaraguan who perhaps have not heard or have not been informed, of the good news: Yesterday the Armed Forces and the 3-80 Front signed an agreement with members of my government that ends our differences. [applause]

This agreement marks the end of the war and ensures that we will finally be able to achieve the peace for which we have all yearned. This is particularly important for all Nicaraguans on this day, 25 February. I congratulate all of the boys for their patriotic gesture, and I would like to ask all the people who are with me on this morning, my dear friends, and all the Nicaraguan people for a round of applause to acknowledge their patriotic decision to lay down their weapons, (?proving) once and for all that the peace we have so yearned for is possible in our blue and white [colors of the Nicaraguan flag] land. May God bless you all; may God bless all the Nicaraguan people. We will not falter; together we will continue working for the well-being of all Nicaraguans. Thank you, and may God bless you all, my dear friends. [applause]

Foreign Cooperation Minister Denies Misuse of Funds

PA2802041994 Managua Sistema Nacional de Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Report by Milviana Jerez from the "National Newscast;" passages within quotation marks are recorded]

[Text] Foreign Cooperation Minister Erwin Kruger categorically denied any misuse of funds in his ministry, adding that an audit conducted by an international firm from 1991 to the present confirmed that everything is aboveboard.

Kruger also confirmed the resignation of Deputy Foreign Trade Minister Alfonso Deshon.

[Kruger] "I categorically and completely reject those reports. There has been no misuse of funds in this ministry. You must understand that the Foreign Cooperation Ministry is the ministry that works to obtain foreign cooperation."

Kruger added that an international auditing firm confirmed that there has been no misuse of funds in his ministry.

[Kruger] "For two consecutive years, an international auditing firm presented an independent report to the international community on the state of foreign cooperation. The international community has found the system to be appropriate and has been satisfied with the reports."

Kruger said Comptroller General Arturo Harding visited him this morning.

[Kruger] "We are open. If the Comptroller General wants to visit our office, he is perfectly welcome. We will show him all the work we have done, all the audits. We are not trying to hide anything. On the contrary, all of you, many of you, know me and know the work I have done and the honesty with which we handle this office."

Kruger said he regrets such reports, which only hinder international cooperation.

[Kruger] "Our objective is not to file suits. I believe the problem of democracy is a problem of all Nicaraguans and that we should exercise our right to inform responsibly."

The Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden give Nicaragua $67 million in cooperation aid per year.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Promotes Cooperation

PA2802044894 Managua Sistema Nacional de Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Report by Maria Elsa Suarez; from the "National Newscast"]

[Text] After a meeting with President Violeta Chamorro, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Georgiy Mamedov said Nicaragua and Russia will strengthen trade relations. The deputy foreign ministers of both nations signed a cooperation agreement, and the Russian official met with Presidency Minister Antonio Lacayo later in the afternoon.

Mamedov told President Violeta Chamorro of his government's desire to strengthen bilateral relations by creating mixed enterprises, supporting the geothermal industry, and providing technical assistance. He also expressed President Yeltsin's desire to meet with President Chamorro in the near future.

[Begin Mamedov recording] We told President Chamorro that the United States could equally contribute to the democratic transformation in Nicaragua. I have also told President Chamorro that I visited her office five years ago when someone else was there, but this time I felt more comfortable. [end recording]

Mamedov also met with Presidency Minister Lacayo. They discussed ways to strengthen bilateral trade and the transformation process in both countries.

The Nicaraguan and Russian deputy foreign ministers signed a protocol on consultations between both foreign ministries.

Nicaraguan Deputy Foreign Minister Jose Pallais spoke during the ceremony:

[Begin Pallais recording] Russia has significantly contributed to the achievement of democracy and peace in Central America. In the future, we hope to strengthen and increase commercial relations between our countries. [end recording]

Nicaragua's foreign debt with Russia is approximately $500 million. The renegotiation of that debt is pending.

[Begin Mamedov recording] My personal opinion is that we could and should forgive part of the debt. [end recording]

Panama

Foreign Minister on Senator Helms' Expropriations Remarks

PA2602010994 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 25 Feb 94

[From the "RPC Television News" newscast]

[Text] Foreign Minister Jose Raul Mulino has said Panama is not involved in any cases of expropriation of properties, as a U.S. senator is claiming. Mulino has said U.S. Senator Jesse Helms' assertion about the alleged confiscation of U.S. companies has nothing to do with the situation in this country.

[Begin Mulino recording] In Senator Jesse Helms' statement on this topic, he only mentioned Panama within a group of countries, but none of the cases mentioned by Senator Helms refer to events that have occurred in Panama; therefore, if there was some mention, it was totally accidental by Senator Helms.

According to the information that Ambassador Ford [Panamanian ambassador to the United States] gave me a few minutes ago, Helms did not refer to a specific case in Panama. The only one that occurs to me which he could have mentioned is the one concerning the official residence of our embassy in Managua. That case is not one involving a conflict, because Panama told the Nicaraguan Government more than one year ago the moment it wants the house, it will be returned. [end recording]

The foreign minister added the house had been given to the Noriega government by the Sandinist government without any specific agreement; therefore, Panama is willing to return that house as soon as the Nicaraguan Government so requests.

Mulino Comments on OAS Election, U.S. Position

PA2602202594 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 26 Feb 94 p 2A

[Report by Lastenia Murillo Munoz]

[Text] Panamanian Foreign Minister Raul Mulino said yesterday that Panama continues to support Costa Rican Foreign Minister Bernd Niehaus unconditionally in his aspiration for the position of OAS Secretary General. Mulino added that a pledged word "is written in stone," even if it is misinterpreted later.

Mulino said that groundless reports on this subject have been spread because, when Panama offered to support the Costa Rican Government, Colombian President Cesar Gaviria's candidacy was anything but decided.

Colombian Foreign Minister Noemi Sanin de Rubio visited Panama for a few hours to promote Gaviria's candidacy to this position, but Panama had already pledged its word for Costa Rica.

According to Mulino, the U.S. position in promoting Gaviria's candidacy cannot be interpreted as "blackmail. Whether we like it or not, the United States is a country on our continent with the full right to vote for whichever candidate it chooses," Mulino said finally.

Endara, Gaviria Issue Joint Declaration

PA2502175994 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 24 Feb 94 p 1A

[Report by Vilma E. Figueroa B.]

[Text] President Guillermo Endara of Panama and President Cesar Gaviria of Colombia have signed a joint declaration at the fourth meeting of the Colombian-Panamanian neighbors' commission. The two presidents signed the Transfer of Convicted Individuals Treaty, the Illegal Immigrants Agreement, and the Complementary Protocol on the Legal Assistant and Mutual Cooperation Agreement in Medellin. They also created the Permanent Commission for the Demarcation of the Colombian-Panamanian Border at the meeting. This commission will hold its first technical meeting in Santa Fe de Bogota on 17 and 18 March.

In one of the paragraphs of the joint declaration, President Gaviria reiterated his satisfaction with Panama's efforts for the orderly transfer of the Panama Canal, which will occur on 31 December 1999, and the canal's administration. According to a press note released by the Panamanian Presidency, the two presidents expressed their firm conviction that a full and participative democracy is the appropriate framework to meet the people's needs. They also agreed that social development programs strengthen democracy and that fighting poverty is a priority.

An ANSA dispatch, datelined Medellin, reports that yesterday Gaviria stressed the need for Colombia and Panama to consolidate their integration and cooperation to fight drug trafficking jointly. He maintained that "the big effort" the two countries are making to confront drug trafficking would be greatly rewarded "if we were able to strengthen coordination and cooperation between our nations' authorities on a permanent basis. Colombia and Panama have a great opportunity to fight this scourge; we can do more to make this threat disappear forever," Gaviria said at the opening of the fourth meeting of the Colombian-Panamanian neighbors' commission.

Consensus Candidate Lewis Galindo 'Democracy 94' Interview

PA2502171894

[Editorial Report] Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish at 0200 GMT on 23 February broadcasts during its regularly scheduled "Democracy 94" program a 60-minute live or recorded interview with Samuel Lewis Galindo, presidential candidate of the National Consensus Alliance, by "Democracy 94" host Hugo Famania.

Famania opens the program by asking Lewis Galindo why he decided to run for office since he is a very successful entrepreneur. He replies: "I have devoted 45 years of my life to private enterprise and I have developed it. I have created many job opportunities and given employment to many. I have seen many enterprises grow, and I have reached a stage in my life where I think I must devote my efforts to serving the fatherland." Lewis Galindo goes on to speak about the economic plan he would launch and explains that "we must try to keep a 5-percent annual growth rate," and attain a national consensus that will keep the country calm so that foreign investments are made. This can only be done "if we modernize the government structures by improving administrative functions," he adds.

When Famania asks him if this modernization entails "reducing bureaucracy," Lewis Galindo answers that a modern and efficient state requires fewer personnel, but we must watch out for the high unemployment rate; therefore, private enterprise must grow. The presidential candidate goes on to speak about ways to reduce poverty and pay the "social debt" rather than pay the foreign debt. After pointing out the foreign debt is higher today that in 1989, Lewis Galindo says that, should he be elected, he will seek an agreement with the people to see how the country can cope with "these inherited responsibilities."

At 0230 GMT, Famania explains that Samuel Lewis Galindo is the presidential candidate of the National Consensus Alliance that is made up of Solidarity Party and the National Unity Mission. Expanding on the foreign debt issue, Lewis Galindo points out that another presidential candidate, Ruben Dario Carles, "is also responsible for the increase in the foreign debt" as Carles was the comptroller general for the current administration. To cope with this problem, Lewis Galindo says that the next government will have to do what Costa Rica did. For example, he adds, it must first seek Panamanian economists who will draft a national plan and not act according to "plans imposed by the international financing institutions, which is what has happened in Panama."

Lewis Galindo says that the only way Panama can obtain "adequate growth" is through exports, but the problem is that while private enterprise has modernized, the government has not. Panama must reduce tariffs, and the state must become more efficient, he points out. To sum it up, Famania emphasizes that Lewis Galindo proposes "modernization of the economy."

Turning to the subject of public security, Lewis Galindo says the National Police must become more professional, and the organization must be reorganized thoroughly, with a civilian hierarchy, without including the former officers of the defunct Panama Defense Forces and National Guard.

Referring to the Panama Canal, Famania mentions that "about one week ago, the new chief of the Southern Command said that the United States was willing to change the timetable for returning the military bases at the request of Panama." He then asks the presidential candidate: "Do you think it would be advisable for Panama to change this timetable?" Samuel Lewis Galindo answers: "I think we Panamanians must conduct ourselves with a certain amount of dignity. If the United States gives clear signals that it needs certain areas for some bases that will benefit Latin America and Panama, I—as head of the government—would be willing to negotiate. However, first of all, certain things would have to take place. First, we must determine what is the value, what is the economic potential of those bases? What are the economic benefits those bases have for the country versus the exploitation of those areas? It will probably be more advantageous for Panama—should there be mutual interest by the two nations—that these bases be moved to other areas where they will promote the development of those areas, for example Darien, should that be the case. Nonetheless, we must first consult the sovereign power, that is, the people."

As for the reverted areas, Lewis Galindo says he proposes conducting studies "to obtain the maximum benefit of the entire canal bank area, so that these resources will attract investors," but this must all be part of an overall program as "the former Canal Zone cannot become a privileged island while Panama remains poor." He adds that "the wealth generated from these areas must help solve the unemployment, health, and—particularly—the education problems."

The presidential candidate then answers listeners' questions that cover subjects such as denying there is any political agreement with the Democratic Revolutionary Party, privatization, and the Social Security system.

Molirena Candidate's Government Plan

PA2502170094 Panama City EL SIGLO in Spanish 22 Feb 94 p 40

[Text] Presidential Candidate Ruben Dario Carles has presented his government plan, which is entitled "Carles' Plan: New Jobs for All," to the nation for consideration. The plan lists a series of immediate measures his government will take to do away with unemployment in Panama and to develop several areas of the nation's economy.

Carles was nominated by the Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement (Molirena), the National Renewal Movement (Morena), and the Civilist Renewal parties. Some of the plan's immediate objectives are the construction of 115,000 "dignified homes" at a cost of $250 million, which will also create some 35,000 direct and indirect jobs. The text of the plan follows:

Carles' Plan: New Jobs for All

1. Promotion of microbusinesses and small enterprises

—Technical support to improve productivity

—Financial support for growth

—Improved training and skill-enhancement

—Information, counseling, and marketing center

—Simple permit process to begin new operations

2. A. Creation and promotion of Export Production Zones nationwide

—Streamline bureaucratic procedures and regulations that hamper and affect our relative advantages

—Bilateral negotiation for better terms for exportable Panamanian products in U.S. markets

—Agreement between workers and management to improve the Labor Code. Elimination of political influence in labor relations by reducing the government's participation in the regulating body. Training and skill-enhancement for personnel

—Special utility and port tariffs for export corporations

B. Support for the Colon Free Zone and international trade activity

—Expansion of available areas for growth and construction of new warehouses and holding and shipping facilities

—More efficient and competitive port services, which are essential for servicing international trade

—Improvement and expansion of communications and transportation services

—Private operation of the national Railroad Company

—International passenger and cargo services from the Enrique Jimenez Airport (formerly France Field)

—Maintenance and widening of the Panama-Colon Highway

—Protection, safety, and control for passengers and cargo between Panama City and Colon

—Fight against drug trafficking

3. Immediately begin construction of 115,000 dignified homes at a cost of $250 million, which will generate 35,000 direct and indirect jobs during my administration

—Development of Tocumen as an international air traffic hub

—Promotion of the free zone for distributing fuel and oil byproducts

4. New investments and improvements in public works and services

—Heightened quality and efficiency in public services (health, education, security, transportation, power, water, telephones, ports, and waste management) will begin during the first 100 days of this administration

—Awareness of public employees' responsibility and the taxpayers' right to receive better public services at all government agencies

—Institutional development requires public administration reforms, and such reforms will be implemented

—National reforestation plan

—Reforestation, forest production, and export programs

—Development of 50,000 hectares of lumber forests across the country

—The creation of 20,000 temporary and permanent jobs in rural areas

—Streamlining and strengthening of tax breaks for reforestation projects

—Environmental and ecological conservation

5. Investment promotion

A. Support for the promotion and development of the tourist sector, highlighting ecotourism

—Creating a single office to resolve excessive government bureaucracy and simplify procedures

—We will improve coordination between the public and the private sectors to allow coherent planning that will promote growth. We will also implement an evaluation system to allow rapid decisionmaking and expeditious actions to encourage investment in the tourist sector

—Establishment of installations and facilities for cruise lines

B. Promotion of a maritime business and international cargo transshipment center with cargo container operations in Manzanillo, Telfers, Cristobal, and the port of Chiriqui Grande.

—Legal and administrative structures will be improved to allow the integration of maritime activities under an entity that promotes Panama as a maritime business center.

C. Bolster the mining industry.

— Incentives will be created for the commercial exploitation and development of our mining resources.

— Exports will be promoted to reach a projected $500 million annually by the year 2000.

— Mining activity will generate 4,000 direct jobs and 24,000 indirect jobs.

D. Develop the export availability of agriculture and cattle products.

— Preferential conditions will be negotiated for Panamanian agricultural products in the United States.

— Agriculture and cattle export production areas will be outfitted with the proper infrastructure.

— The concerted agreement of labor conditions, which are better than what competing countries offer, will be promoted.

— Financing will be sought for the production of agricultural products that have export possibilities.

— Reasonable protection for certain basic agricultural food products for domestic consumption (meat, milk, rice, corn, sorghum, beans, potatoes, onions, and tomatoes) will be maintained.

— A properly operating toxicology laboratory for meat exports.

— A sterile fly production program to wipe-out the burrowing worm. This will generate 500 jobs.

—The creation of facilities to convert Tocumen International Airport into a international air traffic center.

These policies will allow the Panamanian farmer to begin producing nontraditional products, thereby creating new jobs. Protectionism will enable farmers to ensure a market for their production and maintain jobs, and in certain cases, increase production to cover the domestic deficit of protected products.

Note: To the previously mentioned activities, we must add the activities that will emerge as a result of the negotiations on the use of existing facilities in Panama for U.S. Government defense use, which we are proposing.

[Date] Panama, 21 February 1994

Telemetro Electoral Poll Outcome Noted

PA2502153394 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 23 Feb 94 p 1a

[Report by Juan Pritsiolas]

[Text] Ernesto Perez Balladares [Democratic Revolutionary Party candidate—PRD], Ruben Dario Carles [Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement candidate], and Ruben Blades [Papa Egoro Movement candidate] registered the highest citizen preference ratings for the presidency of the Republic. Those results stem from a poll requested by Telemetro Television Network which included interviews conducted in 1,260 houses in Panama, Cocle, Chiriqui, Herrera, Los Santos, and Veraguas Provinces from 9 to 11 February. The Federico Guerra consulting firm carried out the poll.

The results of the poll show that Perez Balladares obtained a 32.8 percent preference rating; Carles a 16.3 percent; and Blades 14.8 percent. Arnulfist Party candidate Mireya Moscoso de Gruber is in fourth place with 9.9 percent; industrialist Samuel Lewis Galindo [Solidarity Party candidate] came in fifth with 2.9 percent; Christian Democratic Party candidate Eduardo Vallarino, the sixth position with 2 percent; and last place is held by Jose Salvador Munoz [Doctrinaire Panamenist Party candidate] who obtained 0.2 percent. The poll results also indicate that 21.1 percent of the people interviewed remain undecided on who they will vote for in the 8 May presidential elections.

Comparing this poll with others carried out at the end of 1993, it can be noted that Carles, who did not appear in the latter, has managed to overtake other candidates, including Ruben Blades, in this one. Blades, however, has suffered a decline in his popularity rating.

Furthermore, the poll results reveal that although Perez Balladares and Carles obtained the highest preference ratings, they are also the candidates who obtained the highest negative ratings. Of polled interviewed, 31.3 percent stated they would not vote for Carles, another 20 percent objected to Perez Balladares' candidacy, 14.8 percent objected to Mireya Moscoso de Gruber, 7.6 percent of those interviewed said they would not back Blades, 3.3 percent would not support Vallarino, 1.9 percent likewise regarding Lewis Galindo, and 1.6 percent do not intend to vote for Jose Salvador Munoz.

The Telemetro poll included interviews in 105 sectors of the country. In each sector 12 homes were chosen.

Regarding candidates for city mayor, Omaira Correa leads with a 31.5 percent preference. She is followed by Andres Vega Cedeno [PRD] with 21.3 percent, Ana Mae de Endara 10.3 percent, Isabel Corro [Labor Party] 2.1 percent, Hernan Arias [Christian Democratic Party] 1.3 percent, Jose Manuel Paredes [National Unity Mission] 1.2 percent, and Maribel Cuervo de Paredes 0.4 percent.

Argentina

Grand Front Constituent Assembly Member Ticket Ready

PY2502005394 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 24 Feb 94 p 6

[Text] The Buenos Aires Province Grand Front (FG) has filled the top positions of the deputies' ticket for constituent assembly member candidates. The ticket is headed by Fernando Pino Solanas, followed by Mary Sanchez, Carlos Auyero, and Juan Pablo Cafiero.

The center-left alliance delayed the release of its candidates' ticket due to a controversy that arose especially over the third place, which was sought by "Juampi" Cafiero, Auyero, and the People's Encounter [Encuentro Popular] party.

The two first places on the ticket and the merits of Juan Pablo Cafiero (one of the FG constitutional reform bill's drafters) were not objected to by anyone. The problem was that, according to some leaders, the FG ticket had a heavy Peronist bias with "Juampi" in third place, and the pluralist composition advocated by the FG people was therefore reduced.

Afterward, there were tugs of war between the People's Encounter and the New Progressive Space [Nuevo Espacio Progresista] leaders. The New Progressive Space leaders finally managed to place Auyero in the third place. In addition to having a long political record, Auyero is a constitutional law professor.

Auyero is followed by Maria Ines Brasesco from the Union of Argentine Women, Dario Torres Molinas from the People's Encounter, and Gustavo Cardessa from the Christian Democratic Party.

Menem Endorses Minister; Downplays Share Price Drop

PY2502215594 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1128 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 25 Feb (NA)—President Carlos Menem supported Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo when he said that the latter is "one of the key people in his government program." He made it clear that "in case of emergency, there are always courageous and talented people who can take on the responsibility" of heading the Finance Ministry.

The head of state endorsed his minister on 24 February, a day on which financial markets were in turmoil and share prices on the stock exchange plunged as a result of insistent rumors of Cavallo's resignation and other technical reasons.

Menem's comment was like an analgesic on the tense atmosphere at the stock exchange and prevented shares from plummeting further.

Menem played down the importance of the decline in stock prices, stating: "This is not the first time the market has been bearish."

The president, speaking on Radio America, noted: "There is invariably speculation on ways to reap greater profits. A bearish market enables those who want to buy stocks to get them cheaper."

He once again remarkrd that the continuity of the present economic model is not tied to those in charge of implementing the economic policy.

The head of state said he always keeps a name "in pectore," ready to replace each of his cabinet members if need be.

Cavallo's case is no different from any other, even though he is considered to be the "almighty" person within the government.

Rumors of Cavallo's resignation affected stock exchange trading on 23 February, when blue chips dropped by more than 5 percent.

The economy minister has had to withstand several attacks over the last few days. San Isidro Federal Judge Roberto Marquevich, for example, accused him of "interfering" in the case of the Opalsen firm—linked to businessman Francisco Macri—which allegedly failed to pay duties on the importation of 15,000 cars.

When Cavallo questioned several aspects of the proceedings, Judge Marquevich charged the executive branch with "meddling" in the judiciary.

The spectacular operations conducted by the DGI [General Directorate of Taxation] especially among the "rich and famous" caused friction between Cavallo and his influential Public Revenues Secretary Carlos Tacchi, who is held in high respect in business circles for his struggle against tax evasion.

Cavallo questioned the methodology used by DGI agents—the director of which is Ricardo Cossio—stating that Luis Maria Pena, the head of the fiscal auditing office, had committed "excesses" during the investigations.

Cavallo subsequently supported DGI agents, but demanded that they be more restrained and observe confidentiality in their operations.

Now that the alleged fraudulent importation by Sevel has been brought in the open, the protection of the Argentine car industry has also come under fire.

Some economists have voiced their opposition to an indefinite continuation of this protectionist policy and found that Cavallo is willing to defend it to the bitter end.

He crashed headlong into Dardo Gasparre and Miguel Angel Broda on two occasions, labelling them and other economists as "market fundamentalists."

Cavallo attacked Broda by bringing to light an old incident of disloyalty within the government.

He recalled that in 1991, the then Finance Secretary Saul Bouer told Broda that the government was going to pay overdue securities. The latter interpreted this as an increase in the money supply, and therefore, a form of devaluation.

Bouer demanded a public apology, with which the minister complied by issuing a press communique that cleared the good reputation of the incumbent mayor.

These conflicts obliged President Menem to put Cavallo in his place during a cabinet meeting.

He reportedly told the minister: "In politics, peppery people lose out."

All these events led people to surmise that Cavallo was going to resign, which in turn had an adverse effect on financial markets.

Menem Visit to Spain Previewed; Comments on Health

LD2802090394 Madrid RNE-1 Radio Network in Spanish 0700 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Excerpts] Argentine President Carlos Saul Menem begins a three-day official visit to Spain today. He had to postpone the visit twice: first because of the death of Don Juan de Borbon [King Juan Carlos's father] and then because of the heart attack he suffered. [passage omitted]

Jose Manuel Martin Meden reports on this visit:

[Martin Meden] [Passage omitted] Menem arrives in Madrid with his political horizon clear after the agreement with the opposition for a constitutional reform that will enable him to be re-elected and to govern until the year 2000 if he wins a majority in 1995. In statements for Radiotelevision Espanola, the president of Argentina confirms his good health and his readiness to continue as president.

[Begin Menem recording] I am much better than before the operation. I shall face it with the same passion, the same enthusiasm, the same spirit with which I have done everything in my life and, of course, with a small quantity of ability. [end recording]

[Martin Meden] [Passage omitted] President Menem says that he is convinced that, through negotiation, in the year 2000 the Malvinas [Falkland] Islands will be Argentine again.

[Begin Menem recording] I have the intuition—and in intuition there is also some share of of intelligence, of wisdom—that in the year 2000 the Malvinas Islands will be in the possession of Argentina again. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Remarks on Madrid Arrival Noted

LD2802110794 Madrid RNE-1 Radio Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 28 Feb 94

[Text] [Announcer] Argentine President Carlos Menem arrived in Spain at a few minutes after 1000 [0900 GMT] for a four-day official visit to our country. At Barajas airport, President Menem made his first statements on Spanish soil, and our colleague Hector Arenas has them. Good morning.

[Arenas] Good morning. I am happy to be in Spain, a country that I learned about beginning with my childhood, said Argentine President Carlos Menem on his arrival in Madrid. He said that Spanish investment in Argentina has doubled, and is expected to exceed $6 billion in the next few years. As for the purchase of a further share in Aerolineas Argentinas by Iberia, Menem told Radio Nacional that it is practically resolved and that there will be a solution.

[Begin Menem recording] Practically everything is completed between Spain and Argentina. Some instruments have to be improved. Things are going very well; there are no problems. [end recording]

UN Notified of Offer To Clear Falklands Mines

PY2402181894 Buenos Aires Radio Nacional Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Text] The Argentine Republic has officially notified the United Nations that it advised the United Kingdom that it is willing to help clear the Malvinas Islands' territory and waters of mines laid during the 1982 war. To that effect Argentina submitted maps locating approximately 30,000 mines.

Mexican Agricultural Imports Ban Causes 'Outrage'

PY2602012994 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2056 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 26 Feb (NA)—Felipe Sola, agriculture, livestock, and fishing secretary, today stated that the government "will not remain indifferent to the outrage" caused by the Mexican Government's decision to forbid the import of some Argentine agricultural products.

Sola has asked the Foreign Ministry to "urgently" convey a protest to the Mexican Government, and to demand that the measure be revoked.

On 16 February the Mexican Agriculture and Hydraulic Resources Secretariat banished the import of rice, wheat, garlic, and peanuts from Argentina for health reasons, although this decision was not officially reported to Buenos Aires.

In a communique Sola stated: "We are confronting a serious nontariff restriction to commerce, which sets a very bad precedent for future commercial relations."

He said: "The argument of plagues and diseases is nothing new for Argentina, and the measure is technically groundless considering that most of them also affect Mexico."

He added: "Mexico imports these products from other countries such as the United States, which is also stricken by the same plagues."

Sola believes that "the Mexican Agricultural Secretariat's attitude is dishonest" and added: "I cannot understand either the measure or its implementation, as under the same criteria Mexico should have already suspended the import of a great number of products from the United States."

He noted that should this measure persist, the export of rice, peanuts, and garlic projected for this year will be harmed.

The measure worsens the situation for wheat because of the U.S. and Canadian decision to subsidize its sales.

Communique 'Strongly' Condemns Hebron 'Massacre'

PY2602013694 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2231 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 25 Feb (NA)—Through the Ministry of Foreign Relations and Worship, the Argentine Government today "strongly condemned" the massacre of Palestinians in Hebron.

In an official communique the Foreign Ministry states that the attack was "all the more repugnant because it was perpetrated against innocent victims at a place intended for prayer."

The communique also "calls upon all the parties to this conflict to act with prudence and conciliation to avoid further bloodshed," and calls for compliance with the agreements entered into by Israel and the Palestinian leaders as "as the only way to achieve a lasting, genuine peace" in the Middle East.

The communique concludes by conveying the Argentine Government's "heartfelt condolences to relatives of the victims of this tragic event."

Bolivia

Armed Forces Query Charges Against Revolutionary Left

PY2502221694 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1749 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Text] La Paz, 24 Feb (EFE)—The Bolivian Armed Forces today asked for clarification about alleged relations between traffickers and outstanding Bolivian politicians. They affirmed that the democratic system is guaranteed by the military institutions.

General Fernando Sanjinez, the Armed Forces commander in chief, today pointed out the need for a detailed investigation to see if trafficker Carmelo "Meco" Dominguez's charges are true.

The arrested trafficker leveled charges during his declaration to Special Antinarcotics Force (FELCN) and a La Paz judge. "Meco" Dominguez, who has Chagas disease, could not finish his declaration in view of his poor health condition.

He linked former Bolivian President Jaime Paz Zamora and the leadership of his party, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), to the top Bolivian drug traffickers who allegedly provided financial support and transportation during their electoral campaigns.

Amid ever increasing dissatisfaction of their fellow party members, the MIR leaders today resumed a confidential meeting to analyze the charges of their alleged links with drug trafficking.

Acting MIR President Oscar Eid was challenged by some factions which plan to "save the party," while other factions urged Paz Zamora to break his silence and isolation, "guide the party," and "face the situation" now that his leadership is under discussion.

Meanwhile, newspapers published new photographs of Paz Zamora and Isaac "Oso" Chavarria—who was arrested by the FELCN in January during one of the largest antinarcotics operations—as well as a copy of one Guillermo Capobianco's handwritten letters dated 13 July 1987.

In the letter he congratulates Chavarria on his birthday. It begins: "Dear Oso: I will not be able to accompany Jaime and Oscar at the big celebration." The letter is signed by Capobianco, who was then an important MIR leader in Santa Cruz.

Other MIR leaders said that in 1987 "no one knew Mr. Chavarria was linked to drug trafficking."

MIR Asks Congress To Probe Possible Drug Links

PY2602030594 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2110 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] La Paz, 25 Feb (EFE)—The leaders of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), former Bolivian President Jaime Paz Zamora's party, after two days of meetings behind closed doors asked Congress to investigate its possible link with drug trafficking.

Confessed drug trafficker Carmelo Dominguez, aka Meco, in a statement to authorities of the Special Antinarcotics Force (FELCN), linked Paz Zamora and his closest aids with the most important Bolivian drug traffickers.

Acting MIR leader Oscar Eid said that a congressional commission will determine whether or not the party as an institution was linked to drug trafficking, and added that if there is evidence involving one or another of the leaders, "we will promote the appropriate legal proceedings."

Eid also asserted that "there is no reason for the former chief of state (Paz Zamora) to be subject to any investigation."

So far the Bolivian media have published about half a dozen photographs of Paz Zamora accompanied by former Army Captain Isaac Chavarria, aka Oso, who is regarded by the FELCN as one of the greatest alleged drug traffickers.

Dominguez asserted that Paz Zamora personally "closed a deal" during a meeting in 1987 with Chavarria and Jorge Roca Suarez, aka "Techo de Paja" [Thatched Roof]—currently in prison in California, the United States, charged with drug trafficking—for $500,000 in financial aid for the MIR's electoral campaign.

Probe Request Accepted

PY2602033294 La Paz Television Nacional Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] The Chamber of Deputies, during its plenary session yesterday, accepted the Movement of the Revolutionary Left's [MIR] request that the lower house's Constitution Commission investigate this party.

I have said, quote, investigate this party, unquote, intentionally because MIR Deputy Mario Rueda Pena will now explain to us that the MIR is by no means, nor is it even suspected of being, involved with drug trafficking, but rather some of its leaders.

[Begin Rueda recording] It is not the MIR, my party—and this must be made quite clear—but some MIR leaders and militants, who have been mentioned by two outstanding Bolivian drug traffickers such as Meco Dominguez and Chavarrias, to the judges in charge of hearing drug cases. I think Meco Dominguez rather than Chavarrias made the charges. Therefore, let us not mistake the trees for the forest. The trees are those mentioned, and the forest is the institution, the party. It is not a matter of saying that the MIR is being investigated; I belong to the MIR, and nobody can say I am involved with drug trafficking, that I am linked to drug trafficking, or can you accuse me of that? Not me. Anyway, the Chamber of Deputies Constitutional Commission will determine who is involved. Well, they already have the names, the names have already been made public, and among them more or less 300 to 500 outstanding MIR leaders are not mentioned, nor are the thousands and thousands of militants the MIR has in its capacity as an institution. [end recording]

Mario Ruedas is right. But the MIR leaders themselves are to blame for the confusion. The MIR leaders yesterday held a news conference during which they said that the MIR rejects, the MIR is submitting itself, the MIR—several things in its capacity as an institution, as a political party—but they did not bother to identify those involved in this affair with Meco Dominguez and Oso Chavarrias. We are referring to an institution with more than 20 years of impeccable reputation.

MIR Leader Cajias Demands Explanation From Paz Zamora

PY2602034894 La Paz Television Nacional Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] MIR [Movement of the Revolutionary Left] leader Fernando Cajias has said that his party should give an explanation not only to Congress, but also to the public.

The first problem was that of corruption. Now "narcopolitics" [narcopolitica] is casting doubts over the New Majority faction of the MIR.

Party leader Fernando Cajias has said that the important thing in this democratic war is to defend and preserve the project that the party has historically endorsed.

[Begin Cajias recording] To this end it is essential to introduce changes, because we believe that [passage indistinct]. [end recording]

The new MIR proposal is that in addition to giving an explanation to the public, the party has to reorganize itself. [recorded passage indistinct]

Jaime Paz is reportedly untouchable. Is that true? We asked Cajias about it.

[Begin Cajias recording] I believe that, undoubtedly, as he is—in metaphorical language—the marshal of the forces, he has to be spared for the big battles that still lie ahead. Yet this does not prevent him from the obligation to give orientation and guidance.

(?I made) a proposal, but I did not say that he has to give an overly encompassing explanation of some problems, but he does have to break his silence, particularly at an internal party level, in order to guide party members. [end recording]

Cajias finally emphasized that the MIR should give an explanation to the country.

Ex-Official Says Drug Dealer Gave to Campaign

PY2602131594 La Paz Radio Fides Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Former Interior Minister Guillermo Capobianco said Isaac Chavarria evidently financed the Revolutionary Left Movement, MIR,'s political campaign. He explained that a MIR committee was then in charge of collecting those funds.

Capobianco added, however, that he did not know about Chavarria's illegal activities and Chavarria had introduced himself as a prosperous businessman.

Capobianco requested that Gonzalo Torrico explain whether he knew about Chavarria's illegal activities. The former minister said Chavarria contributed money to the MIR New Majority political campaign, but he does not know exactly when the contribution was made. He added that Chavarria lent his planes to former President Jaime Paz Zamora's campaign, during which the photographs that have been creating commotion were taken.

Capobianco explained that he does not know how much Chavarria gave the campaign. He denied, however, receiving these funds because they were handed to a committee of MIR members in charge of receiving this sort of campaign contribution.

Capobianco pointed out that at the time, the MIR was fully implementing the New Majority political program, but did not count on the financial help of prosperous businessmen as interested as we were, he said, in financially supporting them. He added that at that time, Chavarria introduced himself as a prosperous businessman dedicated to agricultural activities in the Chiquitana region and offered to help in the implementation work [words indistinct]. From then on, he said, facts are known to a [word indistinct] committee and that he has nothing to do with them.

President Disagrees With U.S. Antidrug Aid Reduction

PY2602185194 Santa Cruz EL MUNDO in Spanish 17 Feb 94 National Section p 1

[Text] Cochabamba, 16 Feb (EL MUNDO)—President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada said: "We disagree with the reduction of U.S. economic aid for interdiction and against drug trafficking. We believe we should have serious and permanent U.S. economic aid without disregarding national sovereignty. We should not be left alone with this problem. The United States now wants to concentrate more on the struggle against drug trafficking within its borders."

Sanchez de Lozada held a very confidential meeting in Cochabamba's El Carmen Hotel with a U.S. senator [Robert Graham] from Florida who is a member of a committee on appropriations and intelligence and with the U.S. ambassador. Sanchez said: "The meeting was very important to let them know we believe it is just and necessary to have the continuation of aid but without violating national sovereignty. The struggle against drug trafficking is a Bolivian priority; it is not imposed but we need support for its success."

Sanchez emphasized: The policy and appropriation of funds to fight drug trafficking depend a great deal on the U.S. committee. For Bolivia this is very important; there is a trend to cut resources for the developing countries. The U.S. Government also has problems with the budget deficit.

Sanchez, who denied reports that the U.S. officials gave some kind of ultimatum for the total eradication of coca within the framework of the "Zero Option" project, said this issue was not discussed.

Sanchez added: "There is nothing concrete on the 'Zero Option' project. What we are after is a new project that would not leave us with the traditional mechanism of repression, eradication, and substitution. The 'Zero Option' is still unknown. We are seeking a final solution, not a traumatic solution, to get out of this situation because that would not be good for anyone, for either the country, the peasants, or the world."

Sanchez also said he conveyed to the U.S. ambassador and the senator the firm Bolivian commitment, as a country and a society, to struggle against drug trafficking, and "to try to get out of the drug business" that is destroying youths and becoming very dangerous because when it is combined with armed groups or cartels it will create violence.

Sanchez indicated that this is an economic and social problem; it is not only a problem of repression because jobs also should be offered to the coca growers—"this is why we are trying to carry out projects such as the Capitalization and Popular Participation projects. Jobs must be created in the coca areas and the entire country to prevent coca growing from being a good business because the price of coca varies according to the level of repression."

Regarding the charges made by coca growers that members of Direco [Coca Reduction Directorate] and Dinaco [National Coca Control Directorate] were eradicating coca by force on 14 February, President Sanchez said there is no forced coca eradication in the country. "It is not included in the legislation and, according to Law No. 1008 of Coca and Controlled Substances, only after payments are made is it mandatory to eradicate the coca plantations; all the other eradications are still voluntary."

Meanwhile, coca growers have declared themselves in a state of emergency, suspended coca substitution, and announced a large meeting for today in Villa Tunari to protest the lack of government answers to their demands for alternative development and the depenalization of coca, and for the defense of coca, which they are sure will be eradicated by force to fulfill the eradication quota of 6,500 hectares by 31 March because not even 50 percent of that quota has been fulfilled.

President Sanchez said: "The eradication is voluntary in Bolivia. The coca growers are like COB [Bolivian Labor Federation] members; they talk without knowing or give information for their benefit or distort it. But I am not offended; it is part of democracy."

Editorials View New U.S. Antidrug Policy

PRESENCIA

PY2402004294 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 13 Feb 94 p 3

[Editorial: "The New U.S. Antidrug Strategy"]

[Text] The speech in which President Bill Clinton announced his new antidrug program will surely go down in history as one of the most outstanding and dramatic testimonies of the damage that drugs have produced within U.S. society. It is not by chance that he has decreed a full mobilization of the government and of citizens.

To learn that in the United States drug addiction is growing despite the efforts that have been made, that it has invaded schools and workplaces, that it has made the streets of small and big cities dangerous, and that many sick people who report to hospitals cannot be admitted because "emergency rooms are full of people who have been stabbed or shot," is a way of becoming familiar with a distant yet formidable tragedy.

Those who want to imitate consumerism could hardly believe Mr. Clinton when he said that people are afraid of going onto the streets because of the violence prevailing there, and that the new law against crime states that the streets will be patrolled by an additional 100,000 policemen. This shows that the drug issue in the United States is really serious.

Consequently, we should not be surprised that part of the new effort—which will have repercussions in our country—will include restrictions on the offer of drugs. The U.S. President has proposed that rather than "hunting" traffickers as they enter the United States, it is better "to stir up the hornet's nest." This means that the struggle in the countries that produce raw materials or drugs will be much harsher.

Clinton said this will be "part of the U.S. foreign policy in the main countries where drugs originate or which are used for transit." This is nothing new for us: Since the 1970's, the U.S. policy in Bolivia and other Andean nations has centered around drugs. Yet this time it has been made clear that the strategy will not seek to merely intercept shipments, it will seek to destroy the cartels that produce and sell drugs "using better technology and more ingenious methods." Besides, the United States now expects these countries to show their "full political will to persecute the drug-trafficking bosses."

Clinton has asked the U.S. Congress to increase by $76 million—to a total of $427 million—funding for this activity in 1995, without specifying the use of the funds. In the case of Bolivia, we know how important alternative development programs are for giving Chapare peasants other sources of income.

Even though militarization—which was so dear to the Bush administration—has been finally eliminated from the bilateral agenda, police interdiction work, with DEA help, has increased without the activities of that agency having been regulated.

The Bolivian Government should obviously support the all-out struggle that the United States and the international community are waging against the fearsome world of drugs. Provisions are necessary, however, to wage this fight within the framework of institutional democracy, preventing the justifiable U.S. zeal from affecting Bolivian sovereignty and initiative.

LA RAZON

PY2402010494 La Paz LA RAZON in Spanish 14 Feb 94 p A5

[Editorial: "The Drug-Trafficking Problem: Unfavorable Winds Blow From Washington"]

[Text] The U.S. antidrug policy seems to have taken an unexpected and dramatic turn. First President Clinton himself, and later on the main U.S. Government authorities responsible for this area, announced to the world that the new administration had decided to lay emphasis on the prevention of drug consumption, and reduce repression activities.

This announcement made sense taking into account the lamentable and universal failure of the repression activities carried out by the Army and police of that superpower, as well as of those carried out by the cocaine producing countries. The millions invested during the last years of the U.S. Republican administration were wasted, because repression by itself only pushes drug prices up, and this in turn gives the drug traffickers more power, thus generating more production and involving new people in this illegal trade. Another irrefutable argument was that U.S. taxpayers were sick of seeing their money ill spent on repression actions within their country and abroad, instead of being used for more profitable purposes.

Bolivia received this news with a sense of relief and hope. The escalation in repression activities was not solving the problem at all; on the contrary it was creating the appropriate conditions for a fearful and dangerous wave of violence which—like what is happening in Colombia—could lead to bloodshed in the country, cause victims having nothing to do with drug trafficking, place the democratic process at stake, increase political and personal rivalries, and bring more hunger and unemployment to the conflictive rural areas engaged in producing coca leaves.

Recent reports from Washington point in a different direction, however, and one not so encouraging for Bolivia, as the plan to emphasize prevention rather than repression only applies to the United States, as the armed struggle against drug trafficking in Bolivia will be even greater. As a correspondent of the international media pointed out when the announcement was made on 9 February, the change furnished by Clinton's plan forecasts days of peace for the United States but of war for Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, and Mexico.

One could say that the increasing militarization of the struggle against drug trafficking is a positive fact, because it is a chance for the Armed Forces and police to receive more funds, thus relieving the National Treasury. This, however, is a cynical and highly dangerous conclusion for the country, which has nevertheless been handling this area in a very unscrupulous manner, through successive administrations. It is quite obvious that between intensifying a stupid war in the country, and having a poor Army and police, the latter is the much better choice.

If the government does not reject this alarming prospect, one could believe that this new policy is not only welcomed in Bolivia, but also that it was promoted by our government. One must not forget that behind this policy in the United States there are people of great influence in the State Department who support its implementation.

The official U.S. announcement states that $13 billion will be earmarked for the treatment and prevention of drug abuse in the United States, while $427 million will be invested to "eradicate" cocaine and heroin, the latter in the "golden triangle" formed by Laos, Burma, and Thailand.

It should also be recalled that these definitions of policy are part of a much broader concept which the Clinton administration calls "global affairs," [preceding two word in English] that is, a strategic concept focused on the U.S. national interests in its new role—which is now generally acknowledged—as international policeman.

Thus, the so-called struggle against drug trafficking is also designed to maintain satellite armies and their own forces trained in combat on foreign terrain. This was the cause of the recent and bitter controversy in Colombia, generated by the small and highly specialized units of the U.S. Army which enter into whatever country in the capacity of "engineers" or "physicians" engaged in civilian projects. The truth is—and this is quite obvious—that they carry out maneuvers using the "rapid deployment tactics" with which we became familiar two years ago.

Bolivians have the duty to be on the alert, and support our government if it dares to raise before international organizations the expediency of depenalizing drug production and consumption that are at this point banned. A sound argument would be that if we continue on this same path, Bolivia will be threatened by instability and violence, which is in no way suitable for South America's international system. People would listen to us if we had the courage to make the proposal. But in order to be able to do so we need to give up the comfortable situation of our Armed Forces living on the repression of drug trafficking.

Brazil

Neo-Nazis Claim Contacts With World Trade Center Bombers

PY2602174694 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 24 Feb 94 p 3

[Text] On 23 February, the Teotonio Vilela Human Rights Committee informed the Attorney General's Office about the creation of a new neo-Nazi group—"White Power" [preceding two words in English]—in Florianopolis (Santa Catarina State). The group says it has created "shooting blacks week."

The group threatens to attack with bombs sites regularly visited by blacks. In publications known as "skinzines," the group reports it is settling in Florianopolis to "defend racial purity and preserve social order." It proposes "expelling blacks from Brazil."

Councilman Marcio de Souza (Workers Party) sent the committee a publication in which the neo-Nazis promise to blow up the building where his office is located.

The messages are signed by pen names such as "Black Killer" [preceding two words in English]. It is stated in them that people involved in the bomb explosion at the World Trade Center building in New York have been contacted by the group and asked to come to Santa Catarina to conduct similar attacks. The Attorney General's Office will ask Federal Police to begin investigating the charges.

Weekly Views Presence of Arab Terrorists

PY2602002794 Sao Paulo ISTOE in Portuguese 23 Feb 94 p 87

[Article by Mario Chimanovitch]

[Text] It would make a great story for a novel by Ian Fleming, the creator of secret agent James Bond. Arab terrorists buy weapons on the Brazilian-Paraguayan border to perpetrate attacks that jeopardize the peace-seeking process between Israel and the PLO. This is not just the product of the imagination of an author. About 15 days ago foreign intelligence services agents in Foz de Iguacu (Parana) detected five Arabs, presumably Palestinians from Lebanon, contacting local weapon traffickers. They wanted to buy plastic explosives, and AR-15 and FAL rifles.

News of the presence of these Arabs reached Brasilia. Brazilian intelligence services and Federal Police were placed on a state of alert. There is fear that an attack like the one on 17 March 1992 against the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires—which resulted in 29 deaths—may take place. Brazilian and foreign intelligence experts are working on the theory that fundamentalists linked to the Hizballah—Party of God, a pro-Iranian organization headquartered in Lebanon—are trying to obstruct the peace-seeking plan between Israelis and Palestinians. An attack would disqualify the PLO as a reliable interlocutor. Iran and some Arab extremist organizations are against any sort of agreement between Palestinians and the State of Israel.

It is believed the five individuals may have entered Brazilian territory through Argentina or Paraguay, taking advantage of the Argentine-Brazil-Paraguay border region and, especially, of the possible logistic support they may have obtained from members of the important Arab community in the region.

Federal Police Director Colonel Wilson Romao told ISTOE that "this is a potentially explosive situation and we are taking the necessary measures to identify these five individuals and prevent them from using Brazil as a springboard for international terrorism." Romao confirmed that since January he has been receiving reports from the border region on movements of suspicious members of the local Arab community. Romao said the terrorist threat is real in Foz de Iguacu. He asserted: "There are all the necessary facilities there to acquire weapons and the flights that may be used for terrorist actions."

The existence of links between terrorists and sectors of the Arab communities in the south of Brazil was established when the intelligence services discovered that Quarai town in Rio Grande do Sul was used as a logistic base for the attack in Buenos Aires. An extremist cell was established here years ago to collect funds from the Arab communities established in Rio Grande do Sul and Parana States to finance sabotage operations against Israeli or Jewish targets in Argentina and Uruguay. ISTOE found out that weeks before the attack on the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, the bodies of a Palestinian couple from Jordan were found inside a vehicle that went over a precipice in the town of Banhado do Taim (Rio Grande do Sul). The police found a large quantity of gold bars with the bodies. The case, at that time, was regarded as an unfortunate story of gold smuggling. It was even said that the gold belonged to the well- known dollar trader Najum Turner, who was involved in the so-called "Uruguay Operation," to cover a loan for Fernando Collor de Mello's electoral campaign. Turner, who is Jewish, was allegedly dealing with gold on the black market for Arab clients unaware that those funds could be used to finance terrorist operations against Israel.

Government Condemns Killing of Palestinians in Hebron

PY2602173494 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2359 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Brasilia, 25 Feb (EFE)—In an official note, the Brazilian Government demanded today that Israel speed up the peace process with the Palestinians in repudiating the killing of dozens of Palestinians by an Israeli settler in a Hebron mosque.

The Brazilian Foreign Ministry expressed "its indignation and strong condemnation of that act" and called on Israel "to adopt the necessary measures to prevent new violence from occurring" in the region.

Government To Sign Property Rights Agreement

PY2602003994 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2300 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] The United States and Brazil have reached an agreement on the preservation of intellectual property rights.

Special U.S. trade representative Mickey Kantor today informed Brazilian Ambassador to Washington Paulo Tarso Flecha de Lima that the United States has decided not to impose sanctions against Brazil.

The Brazilian Government has announced that it intends to sign, in April, the international patent preservation agreement approved by GATT, the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs.

Argentine Defense Minister Visits To Resolve 'Bad' Ties

PY2602153594 Buenos Aires PAGINA/12 in Spanish 25 Feb 94 p 4

[Article by Gabriel Pasquini]

[Text] Defense Minister Oscar Camilion guaranteed the Brazilian Government of President Itamar Franco that Argentina "will under no circumstance sacrifice its relations with Brazil to strengthen its links with the United States." Carrying out a more diplomatic than military mission, Camilion met members of the Brazilian civilian and military ministries in Brasilia in an effort to improve the deteriorated relations between the two countries.

Sources close to the minister told PAGINA/12: "The Brazilian Government invited Camilion for a visit to try to ease the current bad bilateral relations." But Camilion is very well known in Brazilian political circles because under a similar situation in 1977, when he was ambassador in Brasilia, he had to maneuver with great skill to reduce the reciprocal tension that was threatening to explode into open conflict.

The current situation has not reached that extreme but it is really bad. With difficulties in the process of Mercosur [Common Market of the South] and problems on economic matters, the foreign policies of the two countries are going in different directions: While Argentina is getting closer to the United States, Brazil opens new fronts of conflicts with Washington every day.

This is particularly true on military matters. The Brazilian Armed Forces have expressed their anti-American position and refused to take a step back in their independent arms race development. The Brazilian Armed Forces have charged that the United States is trying to go over Brazilian sovereignty in the Amazon, and have indirectly accused several neighboring countries—including Argentina—of allowing the Pentagon military exercises and bases in their territory for that purpose.

This situation has worsened the historic military distrust between Argentina and Brazil. Camilion is aware that the situation now involves a triangle: In his meetings with U.S. officials in Washington last year, Camilion was able to personally see the concern of Bill Clinton's administration over the future of Brazil.

This is why he said on 24 February that Argentina "will under no circumstance sacrifice its relations with Brazil to strengthen its links with the United States."

Argentina and Brazil also agreed that the Argentine purchase of U.S. Skyhawk planes is no reason for conflict. Brazilian diplomatic sources said: "No one believes the rearming effort is against Brazil." Camilion also publicly said: "Argentina is not interested in creating any problems with its neighbors."

It is not easy, however, to make progress on the military chapter of Mercosur, as was clearly established at the first Mercosur armed forces seminar, held in Buenos Aires last year, when due to the different positions no common agreement beyond the formal was reached.

Camilion admitted: "Integration in that area is not so easy." As an example, Argentina and Brazil are rivals in the bidding for supplying 764 training airplanes to the U.S. Air Force and Navy. Camilion said: "The two countries' airplanes are among the best." Then in a conciliatory manner he suggested that the two countries' military industries could reach a cooperation agreement if one of them gets the contract. The briefing Camilion will give President Carlos Menem today after his return to Buenos Aires on his talks with Itamar Franco will certainly not cover just these issues.

U.S. Bid Result Partnership Proposed

PY2502215294 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 24 Feb 94 Section 2 p 4

[Text] Argentine Defense Minister Oscar Camilion yesterday proposed to Embraer [Brazilian Aeronautics Company] Superintendent Ozires Silva a cooperation agreement should one of the two countries be awarded the U.S. Government bid to supply 800 aircraft for military training purposes. The contract is worth $4.5 billion. Camilion visited the Embraer premises yesterday.

FOLHA was unable to contact Ozires yesterday. Embraer Social Communications Manager Mario Galvao was unaware of Embraer's decision regarding the offer. Embraer is participating in the bid with the Super Tucano turbo-prop aircraft. The Argentine FMA [Military Aircraft Factory] will participate in the same bid with the IA-63 Pampa jet. The results of the bid will be disclosed at the end of the year.

Rossi Weapons Firm Sells Shotguns to Thai Army

PY2502144594 Sao Paulo GAZETA MERCANTIL in Portuguese 22 Feb 94 p 29

[Article by Lilian Bem David]

[Text] Porto Alegre—The Amadeo Rossi Weapons and Ammunition Inc. of Sao Leopoldo, Rio Grande do Sul, closed a deal with the Thai Army to supply 6,000 single-barrel shotguns for $280,000. This was reported by company exports manager Rubem Faggiano. The .12-gauge Pomba-230 shotguns will be inspected on 21 March by the Royal Thai Army-Bangkok, and will be shipped immediately from the Port of Rio Grande. The payment will be made in cash through a letter of credit, Faggiano reported.

This is the first sale Rossi has made to Thailand after winning an international bid last October. Rossi Inc. manufactures nearly 20,000 Pomba-230 shotguns per year, 7,000 of which are exported to Argentina. "New markets for this kind of weapon are opening in Africa and the Middle East," Faggiano said. Five hundred shotguns, which will be shipped in April, were sold to Papua New Guinea for $30,000, Faggiano said.

Long-barrel weapons are responsible for less than 20 percent of Rossi's sales. About 3,500 of these weapons are manufactured per month. The $30 million sales Rossi made in 1993 were principally obtained through the sale of handguns, of which Rossi manufactures 20,000 to 22,000 per month.

Handgun exports amounted to $18 million last year in comparison with $14 million in 1992 and $9 million in 1991. From 40 to 45 percent of the export production is sold in the U.S. market. Last January, the special Rossi 720 .44-caliber with a four-inch barrel for five shots, received an award as "the best imported handgun" from the American Fire Arms Institute [preceding four words in English] made up of U.S. weapons manufacturers.

This year, Rossi will launch a .22-caliber Magnum revolver and the entire .357-caliber Magnum line with ventilated ribs and stainless steel parts. Rossi also will launch the six-bullet Snubby revolver, a .38-caliber special (SPL) small gun that weighs nearly 700 grams and which is being manufactured for five bullets so far.

Britto on Electoral Alliances, PMDB, PT Prospects

94SM0233A Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 16 Jan 94 p 3

[Interview with former Minister of Social Security Antonio Britto by Artur Pereira; place and date not given]

[Text] Atlantida, Rio Grande do Sul—Identified in a recent poll as the PMDB's [Brazilian Democratic Movement Party] favorite candidate for president of Brazil, former Minister of Social Security Antonio Britto insists he is going to run for governor of Rio Grande do Sul State. Now recovered from surgery to repair a hernia, Britto is relaxing at the beach resort of Atlantida and using the time to receive an average of 50 people a day, mostly delegates from the state branch of the PMDB. Walks along the beach are gradually being replaced by long phone conversations in which he tries to round up support for the party's nomination. "The only reason I would not run for governor is if the party denies me the nomination," he said.

The decision to run in a regional election, in his opinion, puts him in an especially good position to discuss the future of his party, now weakened by charges of corruption against quite a few of its stalwarts. Britto's prescription is simple: "The PMDB candidate must be a familiar face. It must be a clean face." To the former minister, politicians today can no longer equivocate when it comes to ethical and moral issues.

These subtle criticisms are aimed at a specific target: former Sao Paulo Governor Orestes Quercia. In an interview with O GLOBO, Quercia had made a rather unflattering assessment of Antonio Britto the politician, accusing him of being too inexperienced to run for the presidency. The response came in the form of cruel irony: "I do not want to write any page today that I would have to explain tomorrow," Britto said, emphatically, after begging "Dr. Quercia's" pardon for having too short a resume for his 41 years.

In informal conversations with friends and advisors, Antonio Britto gives other reasons for turning down the nomination to run for president under the PMDB banner. He would not feel comfortable working the crowds in the company of colleagues whose images are tarnished—some by charges of corruption, others by woeful performances in regional posts. Britto thinks this would jeopardize the good ratings he has achieved in the polls. That is why he urges a far-reaching purge in the PMDB, with the proviso that the accused be guaranteed every opportunity to defend themselves. "The way it is on the campaign trail today, the PMDB has to stop at every corner to give explanations," he lamented.

Although he turned down the invitation to serve as the government's new leader in the Chamber, the former minister vigorously defends his friend Itamar Franco. Orestes Quercia's harsh criticisms of the government and the president do not please Britto. He credits the Itamar government with reinstating ethics and dignity in the federal public administration of this country.

The former minister's isolation in the southern coastal resort is only relative. Early in the morning Britto receives telephoned reports from his advisors about stories in the day's newspapers in central Brazil. Starting last Thursday, he began a program of visits to nearby towns, as part of his campaign for governor of the state.

[Pereira] A survey taken in the PMDB indicates that you are preferred by 35 percent of respondents, compared with 10 percent for Orestes Quercia. Does that encourage you to run for president?

[Antonio Britto] Obviously, I am flattered by the results of those polls. However, they cannot make me change a decision that is irreversible: my decision to run for governor of Rio Grande do Sul.

[Pereira] Deputy, you have not only the PMDB survey in your favor. You are also well situated in the public opinion polls. Wouldn't that make you change course and run for Planalto Palace?

[Antonio Britto] I have been interpreting those opinion polls primarily as a judgment of my accomplishments at the Ministry of Social Security. So I am happy when I see those figures, but a candidate for the presidency—and it seems to me Dr. Collor taught us that—is not viable unless there is a lot of solidity in his platform and among his supporters.

[Pereira] What kind of problems would prevent an agreement prior to October's presidential election?

[Antonio Britto] The parties are looking at the national picture through the lens of parochial interests. So the PSDB [Brazilian Social Democracy Party] looks at the polls, sees that it is strong in Sao Paulo, and bases its approach on that. The PMDB does the same thing, and so on.

[Pereira] But isn't there a contradiction there? By opting to run for governor of Rio Grande do Sul, aren't you showing greater concern for regional matters than the problems of this country?

[Antonio Britto] It is not a matter of putting either one first. It is a matter of having a concern that, naturally, is national—to win a more appropriate role for Rio Grande do Sul.

[Pereira] Do you think the atmosphere is favorable to the emergence of an alliance at the center to oppose Lula and Maluf?

[Antonio Britto] I think it is only a matter of time before we see an understanding between the labor-oriented and social democratic sectors. It could happen today, if people would take the larger view. But if it does not happen today, it will happen tomorrow out of necessity. God willing, the necessity will not be too great and the price paid for the delay not too high. I do not know whether the country can stand yet another process that is formally legitimized by democracy but made illegitimate by administrative failure. What we do not know is whether the country will continue to put up with a situation where people are told to renew their hopes through the ballot box, but later their frustration is renewed because of the administrative actions they witness.

[Pereira] In light of this danger of a repeat of frustration, don't you think this is a good time for politicians to put aside their personal interests?

[Antonio Britto] What scares me is realizing that someone is going to be elected president. He will bear an extraordinary burden of hope, but also a dose of voter impatience that was not present in the wake of previous elections.

[Pereira] Former PMDB president Orestes Quercia said the country is leaderless. Would you agree?

[Antonio Britto] Obviously not. President Itamar inherited the worst situation in the history of the Republic: empty coffers, a disbelieving public, and a wrecked state. Despite all those difficulties, his performance will be measured by the fact that the next president will find the country in better shape than Itamar found it. Furthermore, we must credit him for reimposing ethics and dignity in the federal administration. So the presidential hopefuls should be the first to support Itamar.

[Pereira] What would you say is the purpose of those criticisms?

[Antonio Britto] I do not have to judge Dr. Quercia's intentions. I judge the effect of what he said, and the effect is not positive for this country. It is very easy today to take positions based on "I have nothing to do with that."

[Pereira] In the case of the PMDB, is this happening because of internal disputes?

[Antonio Britto] In the past, the PMDB's prestige was the result of a common position taken by the majority. Now we have neither the personal prestige represented by [the late] Tancredo [Neves] and Ulysses [Guimaraes], nor the programmatic prestige. The PMDB today is a confederation whose components talk to each other through the newspapers. What motivates people to stay in the PMDB is the belief that in political party life, you don't solve the problem by changing the name of the shop or its window display.

[Pereira] Former Governor Orestes Quercia said you have neither the background nor the experience to run for the presidency. What is your reaction?

[Antonio Britto] I should beg Dr. Quercia's pardon because, at 41, I have only able to become a federal deputy, a minister, and—above all—to earn a degree of respect that touches me greatly, that inspires me, i.e., the respect of my fellow citizens. Perhaps my delay in building a longer resume is due to the fact that I am very careful. I do not want to write any page today that I would have to explain, or regret, tomorrow.

[Pereira] You and Senator Pedro Simon head the so-called "authentic" group within the PMDB. Is that group disposed to face up to the fight and compete against Quercia at the party convention?

[Antonio Britto] There is no fight at all. What Senator Simon, I, and the majority of the party members have said is something extremely simple. This country has improved a lot in these past months because two principles without which there can be no nation have been rediscovered in Brazil: solidarity, and dignity. You can choose to be a parliamentarist, presidentialist, republican, monarchist, social democrat, socialist, or capitalist, but you cannot choose a country where there is no dignity or solidarity. What we have been saying is that in this improved country, neither the PMDB nor any other party can even begin to present itself to society if it does not offer alternatives that are characterized from the outset by dignity. The face of the PMDB candidate must be a clean face.

[Pereira] Does this mean the PMDB will have trouble during the presidential campaign because it harbors some of the so-called "dwarfs" from the Budget Committee and people accused of corruption, as is the case with former Governor Orestes Quercia?

[Antonio Britto] I do not think people can equivocate any longer on issues involving the ethical conduct of public figures. As for the colleagues who have been touched by the charges, the correct road would seem to me to be assuring ample opportunity for defense and total support so they can defend themselves. If it is proven that they are involved, the party can no longer live with them.

[Pereira] But how can you patch together a unity that involves leaders who have been tarnished by accusations of corruption or poor administration?

[Antonio Britto] Brazil is nostalgic for the old MDB [Brazilian Democratic Movement] and we in the PMDB miss it, too. Particularly since during the MDB era, the party's strength was that it could work the crowds and be considered by the man-in-the street as an instrument of Brazilian society that could bring about a sensible change in the social democratic line. Dr. Ulysses used to say—and he repeated it in that historical speech of his when he resigned as president of the PMDB—that "politics is either practiced in the streets, or not practiced at all." Going out into the streets will become possible for the PMDB if it understands some of the requisites put there by society as, for example, the need for dignity. This means the PMDB must undertake a renewal of its cadres.

[Pereira] So you do not think the PMDB is ready for the campaign trail today?

[Antonio Britto] Right now the PMDB in many states is uncomfortable about going into the streets and having to stop at every corner to give explanations. That is why we urge that Pedro Simon be named party president, since he has the best resume within the PMDB. He would be able to lead the process of renovation and purge. But I think that even if Simon is not party president, the future of the PMDB will continue to depend greatly on him. The party has a preliminary question to answer within the next few weeks: whether it wants to be a participant or just a spectator in the election process. If it is content to be a spectator, fine, then it has nothing to worry about. It can just keep doing what it is doing. If it wants to compete, then it has to change.

[Pereira] In light of this confused party situation, do you think Lula would be elected if the voting took place today?

[Antonio Britto] No. If Lula could be considered today as president-elect, he would not be stuck down there at

28 or 29 percent. I think Lula has a biography that must be respected, but he has not yet faced the realities of the campaign. The campaign has not begun yet. Actually, so far the PT [Workers Party] is the only party that has not been of help to Lula. The rest seem—because of omission, confusion, or division—to have been working for Lula.

[Pereira] Were Lula to win the election, do you think he could forge the agreements that would guarantee his ability to govern?

[Antonio Britto] The biggest problem Lula faces is that fact that many people in the PT go to bed dreaming of Felipe Gonzalez but wake up next to Fidel Castro. The PT seems to me to be suffering from very serious doubts about the role it should play—a modern and progressive role that seeks alliances with social democratic sectors to build a majority, or the opposite. That can work only if the platform is a minority plan imposed on a majority. Both the future of the PT as a party and that of Lula depend on the answer to that question.

[Pereira] Might the indecisiveness of that parties give rise to another savior of the Fernando Collor type?

[Antonio Britto] I think that despite the suffering, the Collor era did us some favors. One is that it put an end to these candidates who come out of nowhere and, worse, whom no one knows where they are going. I do not think there will be anything new in the election context in terms of names. Novelties, if any, will be found in formulas, agreements, and coalitions.

[Pereira] If it turns out that the parties cannot agree on a candidate through a so-called "third route" and if former Governor Orestes Quercia wins at the PMDB convention, would you stand on the same platform with him?

[Antonio Britto] In the first place, I would be afraid of spoiling Dr. Quercia's platform appearances because of my lack of experience (chuckles). But obviously, I do not think there is any way for Dr. Quercia to become a candidate until the explanations he was asked to provide become a solid reality. I think he himself is acting correctly by beginning to take steps, that certainly have not been completed, in terms of providing the explanations that the public is demanding.

[Pereira] You were defeated in the mayoral election by Olivio Dutra, of the PT. Isn't there a risk that this will happen again, in the race for governor?

[Antonio Britto] Dutra is the one who should be worried, since he once ran for governor and lost. In politics, no one wins every time.

[Pereira] Deputy, it seems you are a little pessimistic as regards this country's future, given the indecisiveness that you yourself mentioned.

[Antonio Britto] I am not pessimistic. What I am is perturbed because what I see is a country that is poised on the brink of growth, a country that has already identified and located its problems. And yet, strangely, things are not moving forward. There is just one reason for this: we have not yet been able to build the kind of political will that can support a plan for change.

PT Leader Lula Says Program Will Improve Capitalism

PY2502231894 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 25 Feb 94 p A8

[Interview with Workers Party, PT, President Luis Inacio Lula da Silva by O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO journalist Ricardo Lessa; date and place not given]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Lessa] You have referred to the elite that failed...

[Lula] I am willing to make a political offensive against the Brazilian elite, who have managed the country as if it were their private property, frequently running their private enterprises with state funds. The elite have not fulfilled the duties of the state. The elite are collapsing and the PT is not in the government. They are collapsing because of their incompetence.

[Lessa] What is your proposal?

[Lula] We will implement a policy to end elites. We will implement an income distribution policy. I don't want entrepreneurs to become Marxist but Fordist. I want them to understand that by paying higher salaries, the workers will buy what they produce. Just imagine if workers could afford to buy cars, television sets, chicken, clothes. Our country would be much more civilized. Entrepreneurs do not have that mentality. Their mentality is one of high concentration. They sell the idea that the world will end tomorrow and they want to make all the money today.

[Lessa] Then, you want to improve capitalism in Brazil, instead of implementing Socialism, right?

[Lula] That is exactly what I am willing to do. At no time has the PT program been presented as a socialist program. The socialist part of it is the strategic program, the dream, the utopia. We are making a program for five, 10, or 15 years, to meet people's basic, vital needs.

[Lessa] How will you cope with the division within the PT?

[Lula] The press sees one PT, but there is another PT, which is the one I lead. The voting on the moratorium and on the minimum income took place during peaceful sessions of the national party executive board. Yet the press did not notice it. What they want is to depict a war within the PT, a war that does not exist. May God permit the existence of two or more different opinions within the PT. I do not want a party with just one single opinion.

[Lessa] But party bloc members have been forbidden to vote on the Constitutional amendment. They are being constrained.

[Lula] How many things have I already been forced to do while under constraint?! I had to expel a PT deputy although I was against doing it. This is no political constraint; it is the case of one deputy or another who might be more euphoric about participating in the amendment of the Constitution. The majority of bloc members see this as something normal. Disagreement within the PT is normal. If it had been war, do you think I would have been touring the country, leaving the party bloc alone? I would have stayed in Brasilia. The party will participate in the amendment of the Constitution at the time it feels it should. We do not want to endorse a policy of summary voting, which has been instituted by Deputy Nelson Jobim and the conservative wing. [passage omitted]

Colombia

New Guerrilla Group Releases Wife of Putumayo Governor

PA2602021894 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0000 GMT 26 Feb 94

[From the "24 Hours" newscast]

[Text] Aida Ruales de Laso, the wife of the Putumayo State governor, has been released after being held captive for 72 hours by a new guerrilla group. According to reports from authorities, apparently a new subversive group calling itself the Putumayo Liberation Organization [Organizacion Para la Liberacion de Putumayo], whose members are EPL [Popular Liberation Army] dissidents, was responsible for the kidnapping. The objective of the guerrillas was to obtain money to strengthen their movement economically.

[Begin Ruales de Laso recording] I told them this was not the way to help the country. I told them that if we all worked together, but not the way they are doing things, Putumayo would advance. [end recording]

Army Protects Politilicans in Eastern Region

PA2702032094 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0130 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Report by Edgar Augusto Sanchez for the "TV Today" newscast]

[Text] Eastern Colombia has the most extensive guerrilla presence, especially in Santander, Norte de Santander, and Cesar Departments. Despite an Army deployment in that area, guarantees for the normal development of the electoral process have not been given.

The Army troop deployment was prompted by harassment by subversices of nearly 80 towns in Santander, southern Cesar, Bolivar, northeast Antioquia, and Arauca Departments. In Santander, seven National Liberation Army fronts, six Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia fronts, and one Popular Liberation Army front are surrounding towns like Barrancabermeja, Puerto Wilches, Sabana de Torres, Rio Negro, Provincia de Velez, and Provincia de Garcia Rovira. In (Chima) and (Guacota) municipalities in Provincia Comunera, where subversives had never gone before, members of the 46th Front asked local residents not to vote, and some voter cards were stolen. Political groups have begun to abandon southern Cesar Department, especially Agua Chica, in response to the violence. Nearly 200,000 members of the Army and the Santander Department police force are trying to stop the guerrilla incursion. .

[Begin General Manuel Jose Bonet, 2d Brigade commander, recording] I ask the people to go to the polls and vote. The best way people can fight is to vote and show the enemies of the fatherland that society will not be frightened. [end recording]

However, political supporters in the department are afraid and very aware of the few guarantees available to them as they have stopped traveling to the countryside. People here represent 60 percent of all voters.

[Begin recording] [Carlos Plata, candidate for Congress] The Army offered us nine sites to land, but when we arrived here, we could not land in four of them.

[Police Commander Hugo Lozano] We have provided security to all politicians who have requested it. [end recording]

By increasing the number of personnel in the entire department, the Army and the police hope to overcome the difficult obstacles presented by the guerrillas during the electoral process.

Police Forces Deployed to Capital Prior to Elections

PA2702033094 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0130 GMT 27 Feb 94

[Report by Alexandra Ortiz for the "TV Today" newscast]

[Text] Starting today and continuing until 13 March, members of the police force, the Administrative Department of Security, and the Judicial Police and Investigations Directorate will conduct joint operations in Santa Fe de Bogota to counter guerrilla activities.

Nearly 1,000 men from the state security organizations have been deployed to four areas in Santa Fe de Bogota. Elite units will remain posted at the entrances to the capital to prevent guerrillas from reaching downtown Santa Fe de Bogota. Raids will be conducted on the city's outskirts, where intelligence officials report the presence of subversives.

There will be air and sea surveillance during demonstrations and political gatherings, and uniformed personnel will be in the 67 campaign centers 24 hours a day.

[Begin Police Commander Enrique Montenegro recording] If we are able to accomplish this, we can guarantee relative security during the election campaign. [end recording]

Public order forces will be deployed and security measures will be adopted in all cities to counter the guerrilla actions.

FARC Rebels Promise Not To Kidnap Mayors

PA2702135294 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0130 GMT 27 Feb 94

[From "TV Today" newscast]

[Text] The top leaders of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia [FARC] told TV Today that they will not sabotage the 13 March elections and that they are drafting a political proposal for the country. They also promised not to kidnap any more mayors, but they warned that they will continue with their military actions until they achieve a peace agreement. Because of legal reasons we cannot transmit the voices of those who were interviewed, but in the next report we are going to present the basic points of their proposals.

The FARC members said they will not sabotage the next elections and guaranteed that people will be able to vote without any problems on 13 March. We absolutely agree the people should be allowed to express themselves by voting for the candidates they want as their representatives. We are not going to sabotage the elections because we believe it is the right of all our fellow countrymen, they said.

The FARC members note that if some politicians were withheld it was only temporarily and only to discuss their positions. We may decide to talk to someone as it is the only option we have. That is part of the activities conducted by each front, they said.

The FARC said they would continue to promote a proposal for a national reconstruction government. To achieve that they will continue to carry out propaganda activities and said the confrontation situation will continue. As long as there are no agreements the guerrillas will continue to operate. We are strong and have many possibilities, the FARC leaders said.

They say steps have been taken to join the National Liberation Army, and they support the peace process between the government and the Socialist Renewal Current. They say anything done for peace in Colombia is fine with them.

As for possible dialogues between the National Guerrilla Coordinating Board and the government, they say the time is not right and that the solution to the guerrilla problem is linked to the solution of the country's big problems.

Government, Cartel Talks Continue

PA2702042994 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1800 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Report by Carolina Sanchez; from the "NTC News" newscast]

[Text] Talks with attorneys representing Cali cartel members resumed over the past few hours despite the obvious cooling between the government and the Prosecutor General's Office over the drug traffickers' surrender process. The last meeting included the justice minister and the prosecutor general.

[Begin recording] [Sanchez] Government officials, Prosecutor General de Greiff, and attorneys representing the drug traffickers in Valle Department met again on the evening of 25 February. This time the meeting focused on two specific topics: prisons and cooperation that should be shown by those criminals who have expressed their willingness to surrender.

[Justice Minister Andres Gonzalez] First we discussed the need to have these drug traffickers imprisoned in maximum security prisons. Second, we said their cooperation with the justice system must be efficient as [word indistinct] the surrender policy.

[Sanchez] The various organizations that participated in the meeting—the Administrative Department of Security, the Prosecutor General's Office, and the Justice Ministry—will review the proposals presented by the drug traffickers' representative, and the parties will meet again in eight days.

The government expects those criminals who surrender to cooperate efficiently with the system; that is, to provide evidence that can be used to prosecute other criminals and to help dismantle laboratories and drug trafficking networks. [end recording]

De Greiff Comments

PA2702045094 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1800 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Interview with Colombian Prosecutor General Gustavo de Greiff by Felix de Bedout on 26 February; place not given; from the "NTC News" newscast—live]

[Excerpt] [De Bedout] Prosecutor General, what progress was made toward the surrender of Cali Cartel members during the meeting held yesterday?

[De Greiff] We made significant progress in stipulating the guidelines for cooperation and settling the details regarding the prison where they will stay.

[De Bedout] Which prison will it be?

[De Greiff] I think it will be one of the two maximum-security prisons that already exist in Valle Department, such as Palmira and Cali.

[De Bedout] This surrender process has been very controversial. Has the Prosecutor General's Office gone out of its way to facilitate the conditions for Cali Cartel members to surrender?

[De Greiff] No, no. I believe that the criminals' surrender and incarceration will not only benefit the country, but we will also be making progress toward defeating drug trafficking.

In the United States—for reasons I do not understand very well—they believe the fight against drug trafficking is useless and that only drug traffickers should be targeted. They argue that ending drug trafficking is an impossible mission, so they say the best course is to fight drug traffickers and try to stop as many of them as possible. Thus their war against drug trafficking has not been very successful.

I believe that both objectives—that drug traffickers pay for their crimes against society and that efforts be made to end drug trafficking—should be tackled. In Colombia's the current situation—and we are not being naive or too optimistic—we might be able to defeat drug trafficking, at least in some areas of the country. In addition, we might be able to reduce the territory of those drug traffickers who want to continue their criminal activities. Gradually we can continue fighting them and reducing their territory even further until eventually—God willing—we can defeat this scourge.

[De Bedout] But do you believe that legalization would constitute a definitive cure?

[De Greiff] This issue requires more time and more research by economists, sociologists, doctors, chemists. I have only said that legalization is a possibility that must be considered. We must destroy the profits made by drug traffickers so this crime becomes less tempting and is eventually stamped out.

I reiterate: Colombia cannot do this unilaterally; it must be a multilateral action. We must promote research regarding this possibility and in the meantime continue our relentless fight on both fronts: against drug traffickers and drug trafficking. [passage omitted]

Traffickers Plot Against U.S. Troops, Intelligence Network

PA2802031994 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0130 GMT 28 Feb 94

[From "TV Today" newscast]

[Text] An investigation by the Prosecutor General's Office has indicated that drug traffickers from northern Valle del Cauca Department planned to prevent the arrival of U.S. Marines and to halt the Colombian Navy's intelligence network on the Colombian Pacific coast.

According to the Prosecutor General's Office, the plan included the hiring of two noncommissioned officers to accuse Navy Colonel Rodrigo Quinonez and other officers of the murder of more than 100 leftist leaders and labor union leaders from the Barrancabermeja area.

The Colombian Navy's intelligence network was established in August 1991 to fight gunrunning and drug trafficking activities on the Colombian Pacific coast. Drug traffickers later determined that Captain Juan Carlos Alvarez was responsible for establishing the network. Alvarez was then transferred to Barrancabermeja, where he organized the Navy's intelligence network along the Magdalena River. His mission was to uncover possible guerrilla attack plans.

In January 1993 Capt. Alvarez was transferred to Cartagena, where he was murdered on 6 August of that same year. According to the Prosecutor General's Office investigation, the captain was murdered by drug traffickers from Valle del Cauca. Jorge Hernan Gil has been identified as one of the hired assassins who murdered Alvarez. The Prosecutor General's Office also determined that a great deal of information had reached the drug traffickers in Valle del Cauca Department by way of Saulo Segura, an NCO who had worked on the Pacific network and who, along with Juan Carlos Lopez Maquilon, accused Col. Rodrigo Quinonez and other Navy officers of murdering more than 100 leftist leaders and labor union leaders in Barrancabermeja.

The connection of both NCO's with the Cali Cartel is mentioned in statements made by several witnesses to the Prosecutor General's Office. Once the officers' connections were discovered, the drug traffickers hired four lawyers and sent the two NCO's to testify against the Navy intelligence chief and against several Pacific network officers. According to documents in the hands of the Prosecutor General's Office, the cartel intended to undermine the work done by the Navy intelligence network and prevent the arrival of the gringos in Juanchaco.

The Prosecutor General's Office uncovered this plan after three months of investigation, but the Cali Cartel was able to achieve one of its objective: to dismantle the Navy's intelligence network on the Pacific coast.

This week the Prosecutor General's Office issued arrest warrants against the two NCO's, but they have disappeared. One of them was taken out of the country.

U.S. Troops Rumored To Bury Toxic Waste in Malaga Bay

PA2802033594 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0130 GMT 28 Feb 94

[From the "TV Today" newscast]

[Text] The U.S. Marines have advanced their departure from Juanchaco on the Pacific Coast. Only 40 of the 156 U.S. soldiers who came to build a school and a health center remain. The worrisome part is that "TV Today" has learned that their mission was to bury toxic waste in Malaga Bay and that they may return in 20 days to complete their work.

After 62 days of uncertainty and of not believing a single word about the facilities that supposedly would be built by the U.S. soldiers in Juanchaco, finally the soldiers, Marines, engineers, or whatever they were packed their incredible tons of cargo, containers, trucks, and machinery and began their long journey to Panama. In Juanchaco, however, there is even more uncertainty today. A worrisome rumor is circulating on the island that the gringo soldiers did not come to build facilities but to bury toxic waste in Colombian territory. Those rumors are cause for concern among residents.

Out of 156 U.S. soldiers, not even the 40 who stayed and who will leave tomorrow from the naval base in Malaga Bay received any explanation for this action, which now explains the real reason for their presence in our country. What worries the people most is that last Wednesday a U.S.-flagged ship was asked to leave our territory because it carried a shipment of toxic waste. The incident has increased the people's fears and they are afraid to report the case to the media. They merely express their frustration because the work was not completed.

[Begin unidentified resident recording] Now that the work is in Colombian hands, we wonder if it will be finished because an airport has been under construction for a long time, and it is still incomplete. [end recording]

Meanwhile, the U.S. soldiers said they have no knowledge of the case and that they have nothing to do with it. They also expressed their respect and appreciation for Colombia and said they are leaving with the best impression.

[Begin unidentified U.S. soldier recording, in English with superimposed translation into Spanish] We must go home because we have completed our work in Juanchaco. [end recording]

A U.S. soldier told "TV Today" that 20 days after the elections, a new contingent of U.S. troops will return to Malaga Bay.

Meanwhile, we visited the school and health center that are only half finished. Only the roof and walls confirm that U.S. soldiers were indeed there at least trying to build those facilities. Colombian troops, not U.S. soldiers, will work on repairing the airport's runway, which has been practically destroyed.

Energy Minister Announces Plan To Sell Oil to Cuba

PA2502145994 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 25 Feb 94

[From "Caracol's 0600 to 0900" newscast]

[Text] Pereira—Mines and Energy Minister Guido Alberto Nule Amin has announced here that Colombia will sell Cuba from 15,000 to 20,000 barrels of oil daily beginning in July and for an indefinite period under normal commercial conditions and without any privileges.

[Begin Nule Amin recording] There are many things, mainly oil.... [pauses] there is interest in selling oil directly to Cuba. Cuba is interested in buying it under normal commercial conditions, naturally, under international conditions without any special considerations [words indistinct] very important that has to do with mining development in general. [end recording]

The official added that in a few weeks, he will return to the island to complete the details of the oil negotiations.

Ecuador

President Denies Resignation Rumors

PA2502203194 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1852 GMT 25 Feb 94

[Text] Quito, 25 Feb (NOTIMEX)—Ecuadoran President Sixto Duran-Ballen denied today that he is going to resign, condemned rumors of a possible coup d'etat, and gave assurances that he will continue in his post until his term ends in 1996.

"I have not thought of resigning; I shall continue ahead. The people elected me for a four-year period," the Ecuadoran president said in a news conference in the Government Palace.

On Wednesday various local media gave assurances that Duran-Ballen would leave office and Vice President Alberto Dahik would be appointed to replace him.

Duran-Ballen said that on that day he received numerous calls at his home from reporters, officials, and friends to learn the truth. "The callers asked whether I had suffered a heart attack, if it was true that the members of the military were in the National Palace and that I had resigned. They all were rumors," the president assured.

The 72-year-old president had a back operation a year ago and today he said that his health is good. He denied being depressed and affirmed that he is in good spirits to face the problems and responsibilities inherent to his post.

Duran-Ballen, elected president in August 1992, said that rumors about coups and the situation of unrest that exist were created by "people interested in creating instability in the country." He did not identify any of these people.

Regarding the plebiscite his government wants to convoke, the president said that the plebiscite, the date, and the issues it will cover are still being discussed. He said it would be more like "consulting the people."

The Ecuadoran Armed Forces publicly reiterated Thursday their support for President Duran-Ballen and guaranteed the permanence of the democratic system and their support for constitutional order.

According to the political opposition and experts, the Ecuadoran president is burdened by the country's political and economic problems. Right now the country is practically ungovernable.

Vice President Alberto Dahik is constantly in conflict with the opposition, to the degree that legislators have warned that if Duran-Ballen were to resign, Congress would appoint a successor who would not be the official the Constitution envisages.

Energy Minister Announces Reduction in Oil Production

PA2802000194 Quito Voz de los Andes in Spanish 2300 GMT 24 Feb 94

[From the "Voz Andes" newscast]

[Text] Francisco Acosta, energy and mines minister, announced that Ecuador must reduce oil production because the country will no longer be able to use the Colombian trans-Andean pipeline. Acosta reported that Colombian Petroleum Enterprise will not be able to lease the pipeline to Ecuador to transport its crude oil because it is designed to carry 25 degrees API crude, not 29 degrees API, which is the specific weight Ecuador will soon begin to produce.

Thirty Companies Bid for Oil Drilling Contracts

PA2802040094 Quito Voz de los Andes in Spanish 2300 GMT 25 Feb 94

[From the "Voz Andes" newscast]

[Text] Francisco Acosta, energy and mines minister, has announced that 30 companies have requested registration documents to participate in the seventh round of oil concession bidding. Acosta issued a communique stating that so far 24 companies have purchased documents for the Amazon region, and six have purchased packages for the coastal and offshore sites.

There are a total of 13 drilling sites on the block, including 10 in the Amazon region. The other three are located alongside and off the Ecuadoran coastline. The concessions include strict environmental conservation requirements. National park areas and special reservations have not been included. The oil companies that are awarded drilling rights are expected to lay 7 km of [word indistinct] and drill 15 exploratory shafts. The investment is estimated at $150 million. The bidding will conclude on 31 May with the presentation and adjudication of contracts.

Peru

Army Chief Denies Military Control Over Government

PA2702034594 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 2351 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Lima, 26 Feb (DPA)—Peruvian Army Chief General Nicolas De Bari Hermoza said today in Lima that the Armed Forces does not control the government and affirmed that President Alberto Fujimori holds the reins of the country.

In a brief news conference, Hermoza, who is also commander of the Armed Forces Joint Command, rejected allegations by local and foreign observers that Fujimori is "mortgaged" to the Armed Forces.

"Military forces have no influence on the government whatsoever, and any statement to the contrary is groundless," Hermoza said. Several publications and commentators have described him as the virtual "power behind the throne" in Peru.

Gen. Hermoza added that it is clear to the Armed Forces that "Fujimori is the nation's first citizen based on the people's democratic will," and therefore "he is the supreme chief of the Armed Forces to whom it owes discipline and subordination."

Criticism has intensified in Peru and abroad about what many have openly defined as "a civilian-military government" after Congress and the government approved a controversial law giving military courts authority to try a case involving a massacre committed by soldiers.

Independent politicians, opposition leaders, observers from various groups, and local and foreign media have said that the government's "secretive attitude" corroborates the presumed submission of civilian authorities to the military forces.

Fujimori has repeatedly said that it is not subordination but identification between the government and the military forces on everything concerning the struggle against terrorism and drug trafficking.

Poll Shows 45 Percent Think Fujimori in Control

PA2502141994 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1857 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Lima, 22 Feb (NOTIMEX)—Today, a poll revealed that 45 percent of Peruvians believe President Alberto Fujimori is in control, while a similar percentage of Peruvians believe the Armed Forces are in control. According to an Apoyo company poll, 45 percent of the population believes the chief of state holds power, but a similar percentage believes just the opposite.

The poll indicated that 70 percent of the population is aware that two weeks ago the ruling majority in Congress approved the controversial law transferring the case involving the disappearance of nine students and a professor from La Cantuta University to a military court. Meanwhile, 28 percent of Peruvians were not aware of the law, and 64 percent disapproved of it because they said such a law violates the autonomy of the Judicial Branch.

The Apoyo poll also revealed that 72 percent of the population believe the Armed Forces indeed pressured Congress to approve the law because members of the military institution are responsible for the kidnapping and subsequent July 1992 murder of the students and professor. Meanwhile, 26 percent believe these actions are justified because Peru is experiencing special circumstances due to the political violence carried out by subversive groups and the need to achieve complete peace.

Ruling party Congresswoman Martha Chavez said today that unlike what occurred in previous administrations, the Armed Forces are currently under the control of the Executive Branch. She emphasized that Fujimori, as commander in chief of the Armed Forces, issues the antisubversive strategy guidelines and that the military forces carry out his orders. Yesterday, Nicolas De Bari Hermoza, commander of the Armed Forces Joint Command and commander general of the Army, confirmed that the armed institutions are subordinate to the president thereby denying Fujimori is a "prisoner of the military forces," like a British newspaper recently reported.

President Fujimori's popularity has dropped from 66 to 58 percent during the last few weeks. These figures, however, are moving further away from the 70 percent popularity rate he obtained in October 1993 and the 76 percent he achieved in June 1992. Analysts believe the enactment of the so-called "Cantuta Law" significantly harmed the head of state's popularity.

Fujimori strengthened his administration with the support of the Armed Forces, especially the Army, after his self-inflicted coup on 5 April 1992, when he ordered the dissolution of Congress and the intervention of the Judicial Branch and other autonomous institutions. On 21 February, the president said such isolated cases as La Cantuta must not hinder the counterterrorism strategy his government is developing. He denied that high-ranking Army officers were involved in the disappearance of the students and professor, as minority opposition sectors in Congress claim.

Opposition, Legal Experts Term La Cantuta Trial 'Farce'

PA2602124894 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1840 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Text] Lima, 22 Feb (NOTIMEX)—Members of the political opposition and Peruvian legal experts today termed as a "farce" the military trial against nine of 11 Army officers involved in the killing of 10 civilians.

The complaining parties stated their disagreement with the imposed sentences by saying the investigations in this case were neither thorough nor impartial, that the trial was not, in their opinion, "trustworthy," and that its objective was "to shield" Armed Forces and military intelligence top commanders .

The Military Court of the Supreme Council of Military Justice delivered sentences yesterday ranging from one to 20 years in prison against the individuals accused of kidnapping and murdering a professor and nine students of a Lima university named La Cantuta.

The event, which occurred early 18 July 1992, generated a confrontation between the political opposition and the Armed Forces, whose top commander, Nicolas Hermoza, went as far as warning he "would not tolerate" any campaign of discredit against the military institution.

Army Commander Hermoza and Presidential Adviser Vladimiro Montesinom, a member of the National Intelligence Service, have been accused by General Rodolfo Robles, who is self-exiled in Argentina for directing "death squadrons." The two have been accused of being involved in the La Cantuta case.

Saul Cuadros, one of the attorneys of relatives of the civilian victims, has said: "Everything indicates the government has politicized the objective of the process so that in a not too distant future the convicts may benefit from an amnesty or a pardon." Cuadros said during the trial, which was held behind closed doors and under strict security measures at the Simon Bolivar Barracks of Lima's Pueblo Libre District, no evidence was presented and no witness was called to the stand.

Enrique Bernales, a former UN Human Rights Commission relator, has affirmed no investigation has been carried out and that the quick sentencing indicates "everything was ready beforehand." He said the sentences were passed before the case was transferred to the military. The ruling came only 48 hours after the files on the case were received, and "it is impossible to read such a voluminous file in such a short period."

The government representatives have praised the military judges, though, noting the sentences are a "very good example" for the Andean country.

Carlos Torres, first vice president of the Peruvian Congress, has said the sentences have no precedent "in the legal history of Peru or Latin America."

President Alberto Fujimori has termed the sentences "drastic and exemplary," and he discarded the possibility of any member of the Armed Forces Command being involved in the death of the 10 civilians, as relatives of the victims, the political opposition, and the independent media have charged.

Legislator Gloria Helfer, of the Democratic Left Movement, commenting on what Torres has said, stated the military court "can break any fast-reading world record after having read and analyzed a file containing thousands of pages."

Roger Caceres, former president of the Legislative Branch human rights commission, has said: "Sooner or later, the La Cantuta case will have to be reassessed in a legal and moral framework that is impartial and just."

Guatemalan Rigoberta Menchu, Nobel Peace Prize laureate, who has visited Lima to inaugurate the first Latin American Rural Organizations Congress on 21 February, called for a more exemplary punishment for the military personnel and for the trial to be directed toward a civilian court.

The military court sentenced Majors Santiago Martin Rivas and Carlos Pichilingue Guevara to 20 years in prison. They were found guilty of being the direct authors of the crime and of having acted on their own, without the knowledge of the Armed Forces command staff.

To justify the transfer of the "La Cantuta" case to the military courts, Colonel Raul Talledo, the military prosecutor, has said the crime had been committed while on duty in an area that was in a state of emergency due to the political violence.

During the trial, which lasted three days, the military court also sentenced noncommissioned officers Julio Chuqui Aguirre, Jesus Sosa Saavedra, Nelson Carbajal Garcia, and Pedro Suppo Sanchez to 15 years in prison.

General Juan Rivero Lazo, who was director of Army intelligence when the military personnel raided "La Cantuta" University in eastern Lima, was sentenced to five years in prison, and Colonel Federico Navarro to two years. Both were found guilty of negligence.

Captain Jose Velarde Astete was given a year, the lowest sentence, as it was considered his participation in the crime had been minimal.

Furthermore, the military court absolved Col. Manuel Guzman Calderon and reserved its sentence on Lieutenant Aquilino Portella, who was tried in absence because he escaped to a foreign country.

Demonstration Rejects Impunity in Case

PA2602200794 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 0154 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] Lima, 25 Feb (DPA)—A massive gathering in Lima this evening repudiated the "impunity" which prevailed concerning the assassination of 10 persons, given a military court's decision not to punish the people who reportedly planned the massacre.

The gathering occurred on the same day the European Union stated in a letter to the Peruvian Government its concern about the way in which the case had been handled—a concern that has already been stated by the United States.

Today's event, held at San Martin Square in downtown Lima, was convoked by relatives of the 10 victims in the so-called "La Cantuta Case," and it received the support of human rights groups, student associations, professional colleges, and popular organizations. Gisela Ortiz, spokesperson of the victims' relatives, said the event was a protest against the "complicity" of the government, which created the conditions so the case could be handled by a military court rather than a civilian court, as hoped by relatives, the opposition, and independent observers.

The different speakers who addressed hundreds of demonstrators agreed in demanding the annulment of the controversial law which allowed a military court to handle the case and the subsequent annulment of the military trial which ended this week with sentences for nine of the people involved in the case.

Ortiz also said the relatives will continue to "stand around" indefinitely in front of the Justice Palace one and a half hours every Wednesday to protest against what has happened.

Today's event, which was carried out peacefully, was limited to a gathering at San Martin Square because the organizers could not get a permit to march from the 2 May Square to the Justice Palace, which was their goal.

Following a verbal trial which barely lasted four days, on Monday a military court passed sentences ranging between 15 and 20 years for two Army majors and four NCO's, who, according to the evidence, actively participated in the event. It handed down sentences ranging between one and five years for three officers who were charged with negligence. The ruling, currently being reviewed by the Supreme Military Justice Court's examiner board because all the defendants appealed the sentence, was rejected by the victims' relatives and various groups because it fails to punish the people who planned the massacre and it states that the assassins acted on their own.

The massacre was perpetrated on 18 July 1992 by military personnel who seized the student residences at the state-owned La Cantuta University and kidnapped a professor and nine students. They were later assassinated and buried on the city's outskirts.

Prosecutor Victor Cubas, who was in charge of the case until the controversial law turned the case over to a military court, confirmed today that the operation had included the participation of at least 45 military personnel. Therefore, he cannot understand why sentences were only given to six persons.

Jurists Group Criticizes Executive Branch Bill on Poppy

PY2502135594 Lima CARETAS in Spanish 17 Feb 94 p 29

[From the "Undercurrents" section]

[Text] A bill presented by the Executive Branch to the CCD [Democratic Constituent Congress] seriously punishing the cultivation of poppy has just suffered its first defeat in legal experts' circles. According to the bill, the sentences range between 12 and 20 years of imprisonment and there is no room for procedural benefits. In the Andean Jurists Commission's (CAJ) opinion, this openly contradicts the so-called "Fujimori thesis" that was included in the 1991 penal code and no longer classifies cultivation as a drug trafficking crime. The Executive Branch's bill intends to radically eradicate this fairly new crop. The CAJ claims that if peasants raise this crop, it will be because its price is competitive and not because of fraudulent intention. The CAJ also claims that the punishment will not be a deterrent as long as poverty in the area prevails. The CAJ claims that the punishment might, rather, contribute to increasing prices and cases of corruption and abuse by producers, and an overwhelming growth in the prison population.

Cali Cartel Seeks To Recover Advance Paid to 'Vaticano'

PY2502135094 Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 11 Feb 94 p A15

[Text] PNP [Peruvian National Police] intelligence sources disclosed that Wilber Alvarado Linares, aka Champa, one of the main drug dealers in the Upper Huallaga, allegedly has taken the place of Demetrio Limoniel Chavez Penaherrera, aka Vaticano, as the main drug supplier for the Cali cartel.

Moreover, the Rodriguez Orejuela brothers, barons of the cartel, allegedly have chosen to contact Champa to try to recover the advance they paid Vaticano to buy white cocaine paste.

According to our sources, the arrest of Vaticano in Cali, Colombia, will represent a hard blow to the Rodriguez Orejuelas' "economy" if they fail to identify the "buyers" who received an advance for the purchase of a "large quantity" of drugs.

Other traffickers such as "Camboya," "Escorpio," "Santena," "Joselito," "Chuquin," "Mecano," "Tico," "Nano," etc., who also have "interests" in the Upper Huallaga might also be affected for having given Vaticano an advance of several thousands of dollars.

In this regard, it was learned that Elias Chavez Penaherrera, aka Lan, who is Vaticano's brother and the pilot of his private aircraft, may take Vaticano's place because he knows his "contacts" and probably the drug buyers who received the advance payment from the Cali cartel.

Moreover, the National Intelligence Service has discovered that Vaticano and the aforementioned drug traffickers had their operations center in the Upper Huallaga, Palma Pampa, Ramal de Aspuzana, Huicungo, "Boca de Diablo," Bellavista, and Bolognesi Province.

As for Demetrio Limoniel Chavez Penaherrera, it was learned that the Intelligence Services as well as Dinandro [Anti-Drug Division] are after several of his front men whose names are being kept secret and other people also involved in drug trafficking.

Expert Criticizes New U.S. Antidrug Policy

PY2502131594 Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 11 Feb 94 p A3

[Text] Although it is the first time since 1904 the United States has admitted that drug trafficking is also a U.S. domestic problem, expectations regarding the U.S. Government's change of attitude regarding countries such as Peru and Bolivia are not very encouraging because "in their capacity as producers, they will be abandoned to their fate; they will be given no aid and no importance will be granted to alternative development crops (for coca leaves)".

This statement was made on 10 February by the UN expert on drug affairs and agricultural development, Iban de Rementeria, who said the change in the antidrug strategy announced on 9 February by U.S. President Bill Clinton represents a "complete change in U.S. anti- drug policy."

De Rementeria said: "Since 1904 the United States has maintained that drugs are a foreign problem. This is the first time they have admitted it is a domestic problem. This is a step forward because they admit that it is a health and educational problem and not just a police issue."

The UN official believes this change of attitude regarding the drug problem was promoted by the failure of the U.S. administration's antidrug policy, which during the past few years cost more than $10 billion per year.

"Drug consumption in the United States has really not dropped. During the past six years the number of consumers has remained more or less the same," he said as he commented that it is estimated there are 10 million cocaine and marijuana addicts in the United States.

In referring to Clinton's new strategy, de Rementeria said: "We must not have illusions because we remain alone in this field."

From his viewpoint, the importance of reducing or substituting coca crops has become a secondary issue.

De Rementeria added: "I do not see how we can plan an alternative development program with the current international agricultural policies if the GATT Uruguay Round has institutionalized subsidies in developed countries and this condemns agriculture in the Third World to failure."

Daily Downplays Hopes of U.S. Antinarcotics Strategy

PY2502003494 Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 13 Feb 94 p A2

[Editorial: "The Peasant and the New Antinarcotics Strategy"]

[Text] U.S. President Bill Clinton recently announced a drastic change in the U.S. Government's antinarcotics strategy.

The idea is to emphasize prevention rather than repression which, generally speaking, has been used since, or even before the tenure of President George Bush.

One reason for the change of strategy is that the one used so far has proven ineffective and only increased the number of consumers by an average of 140,000 new addicts per year to the incredible current number of 10 million consumers.

At the same time as it announced the so-called New National Antinarcotics Strategy, the White House also asked the U.S. Congress to approve a $13.2-billion allocation to implement this program. This includes a substantial increase in the funds earmarked for cooperation with drug producer countries.

This directly concerns us because Peru is the world's biggest coca leaf producer and the money allocated for cooperation is earmarked for eradicating plantations and destroying laboratories.

U.S. Government officials have said that this money—which will not reach Peru or Bolivia until October—will also be used to strengthen the Peruvian and Bolivian judicial systems and to train their respective specialized police units.

Despite a relative increase, and the strategy implemented in Peru, the main changes by U.S. officials do not seem positive.

Iban de Rementeria—a UN expert in narcotics affairs and agricultural development who termed the U.S. strategy "a complete turn around"—has stated that although it is right that the United States has admitted for the first time since 1904 that the drug problem is a domestic problem, there are other aspects that reveal faults in the new strategy as far as our countries are concerned.

Rementeria said: "There should be no illusions because we continue alone in this field," adding that prospects for Peru and Bolivia are not good because "in their capacity as producers they will be abandoned to their fate, they will be given no aid, and no importance will be granted to the alternative development crops."

To a certain extent, the current international agricultural policies upheld by the GATT are even more serious because the recent Uruguay Round has institutionalized the subsidy system in developed countries, condemning agriculture in the Third World "to failure."

Bolivian Chamber of Deputies President Guillermo Bedregal has mentioned the serious social conflicts that would be unleashed in his country following a cut in the alternative development program.

As we can see, it is not just a matter of a mere substitution of plantations, which to a great extend has failed because a series of complementary aspects—such as guaranteeing peasants access to market—were overlooked.

Alternative development is what is sought and needed now; so that the coca grower's problems will be tackled in a comprehensive way, that the peasant will by no means be regarded as a delinquent or an accomplice, but merely a producer with limited possibilities and without an "alternative"—for the time being—to survive.

The solution to the immensely complex trafficking problem must, therefore, contemplate the problem of the peasants—who are on many occasions involuntarily and exploited producers of the raw material—whose needs and interests must also be considered.

Imprisoned General Proposed As Presidential Candidate

PY2502234694 Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 13 Feb 94 p 94

[Excerpts] General Jaime Salinas Sedo—who has been described by Amnesty International as a prisoner of conscience—will celebrate his 58th birthday on 23 February at the Real Felipe prison where he is serving an eight year sentence for attempting to restore the broken democratic institutional order in the country, an effort considered "a crime" in present day Peru.

He is allowed visitors on Wednesdays. His wife Isabel, his closest relatives and friends, and his colleagues who share the prison with him have promised to organize a barbecue to celebrate his birthday during the two-hour visit allowed by the prison.

Outside the Real Felipe prison, however, his assistants and friends are organizing another celebration: The birth of the 13 November Movement (M-13), a nonpolitical organization created with the objective of obtaining amnesty for military officers imprisoned at Real Felipe and the vindication of the name of those who suffered ill-treatment or persecution following the 13 November 1992 constitutional rebellion.

The M-13 will be officially launched on 18 February (the first anniversary of Sedo's sentencing) during a news conference "somewhere in Lima." The place will be announced only hours before to prevent interference from SIN [National Intelligence Service] agents. The founding documents will be signed on 20 February during a spartan ceremony that is expected to take place at the Real Felipe prison yard before the arrested military officers.

The M-13 is inspired by a UN resolution that condemns the imprisonment of the constitutionalist officers, and by a growing national and international support for the rebels release. It promises a hard legal battle that will create headaches for the military leadership that rules the country from behind the presidential chair.

Surveys show that Salinas Sedo has the important support of 6 percent of the voters. He has become a serious presidential alternative, creating a new front to compete against Javier Perez de Cuellar and Ricardo Belmont's possible candidacies.

For this reason the sponsors of M-13 stress: "The movement seeks amnesty for the arrested military officers and a ban on partisan politics in the barracks. The movement seeks to contribute to Peru's democratic stabilization through the support of all the institutions and individuals who want to live in a country where the Constitution prevails over authoritarian adventures."

In an interview on the Radio Miraflores "Double Meaning" program, Javier Valle Riestra defined Salinas Sedo's possible presidential candidacy in these terms: "Some people go to jail from powerful positions, others rise to power from jail. General Salinas is a Peruvian citizen imprisoned for defending the Constitution. He is willing to fight for democracy. He has a military background and a seducing Peruvian character. This is why he must be pardoned. His sentence does not disqualify him from participating in elections." [passage omitted]

We wanted to ask Salinas Sedo his opinion on the "Cantuta Law" which the CCD [Democratic Constituent Congress] approved rather hastily. [passage omitted]

There were rumors of a possible coup the day the CCD approved the measure. Salinas Sedo was aware of the problem: "The rumor might be true, but a coup now would be entirely wrong. We must allow Fujimori to complete his term. We want the people to realize that his perpetuation in power is not good for the country."

Salinas Sedo showed more concern for the possible consequences of the arrest of drug trafficker Demetrio Chavez Panaherrera, alias "Vaticano." I do not know if "Vaticano's report is correct, but if it is, it will have very serious repercussions and the effects will be worse than the revolt created by La Cantuta because the corruption caused by traffickers can destroy the Peruvian Army." [passage omitted]

Concerning the National Police "reorganization" following the guidelines established by the SIN, Salinas Sedo recognized that many organizations need reorganizing. He said: "I do not understand why the government is seeking to minimize the activities of Dincote which, paradoxically, has given the government its best results. The only reason is the egoist and jealous attitude of the SIN."

New 13 Nov Civic Movement Demands Coupists' Release

PA2302131094 Lima Global de Television Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 19 Feb 94

[From the "Global TV News" newscast]

[Text] The brand-new 13 November Civic Movement has demanded the release of the Army officers who are serving sentences at San Felipe. One year after the military court sentenced 25 Army officers to prison for an alleged coup d'etat attempt, leaders of the 13 November Civic Movement said this was an unconstitutional ruling, therefore it is invalid.

General Luis Pastor Vives, president of the organizing committee, called for the release of his comrades in arms, arguing that the government's uncompromising position had priority even though favorable circumstances exist, like the promulgation of the new Constitution. A message from Gen. Salinas Sedo was transmitted during a news conference in which he expressed his disagreement with his sentence although he emphasized he preferred prison to an undignified freedom. Meanwhile, his attorney indicated that Congress should pass an amnesty law for the prisoners.

High Command Denies Dincote Officers' Transfer to SIN

PY2502222994 Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 12 Feb 94 p A14

[Text] Although the PNP [Peruvian National Police] high command has denied it, over 20 PNP officers assigned to the National Counterterrrorism Directorate (Dincote), were transferred over the last few days to the National Intelligence Service (SIN).

Reliable sources have informed EXPRESO that the transfers occurred at the end of January, and that it included a high-ranking Dincote colonel and other PNP unit chiefs.

It must be noted that EXPRESO was the first to report, at the beginning of February, that the PNP had implemented a 30 percent reduction in Dincote personnel.

This reduction is part of the announced "streamlining" of police force personnel, which was disclosed not so long ago by PNP General Director Victor Alva Plasencia.

According to the same source, Dincote has already submitted to the PNP General Staff the names of the 300 Dincote agents who will be fired.

The officer added that it is still unknown whether all of these agents will be transferred to the SIN or to other police units, and that this situation is causing uncertainty among Dincote personnel.

People Concerned by 'Negotiation' With Terrorists

PY2402162694 Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 16 Feb 94 p A2

[Editorial: "Fujimori Denies Any Negotiation"]

[Text] During his short trip to Colombia (which seems to have been a total success), President Alberto Fujimori denied he had been negotiating with Abimael Guzman and other imprisoned Shining Path leaders. The president also denied that he wanted to reduce Guzman's sentence to life imprisonment.

The president was obviously answering an alarming piece of news disseminated by television on 16 February, according to which the government signed a 10-point "peace agreement" with Guzman that included an item on improving Guzman's prison conditions and ended with a general amnesty for him and his henchmen.

It was good for Fujimori to have denied in Bogota the existence of such a pact because it worried some groups of people—which possibly constitute a majority of the population—who worry more about the severity with which they think terrorists should be treated than for the alleged trampling of their human rights.

These groups reacted with indignation when President Fujimori said he had granted Guzman and Iparraguirre preferential treatment in order to get them to write the letters calling for peace. This indignation was reflected in the polls at the time. We will never know how many "Yes" votes [for the approval of the new Constitution] he lost with that revelation.

He should not then repeat the mistake by stumbling on the same rock again. Guzman's letters had the positive effect of creating great confusion among Shining Path cadres, true, and encouraging a split between their leaders and militants. But they have not stopped the violence, which has continued. This continued violence has made many people doubt government policies on the matter, believing that they are unnecessarily indulgent with individuals who do not deserve anything other than the harshest punishment.

In fact, as we proposed in this column earlier, the efficient Justice Minister Fernando Vega Santa-Gadea should make public a detailed report on Guzman's imprisonment conditions and what assurances we have that he will not be able to leave his jail until the end of his days. The television crew who filmed him without his striped uniform, warmly calling for an unconvincing pacification, should now show us where he is and who he is talking to.

Because we still have the bitter taste of his letter with instructions to Scandinavian Shining Path followers, which was first published by EXPRESO, and the fact that no one was able to explain how the letter left the jail, first, and how it left the country, second.

Venezuela

Trips by Alleged U.S. Spy Not Noted in Immigration Records

PA2602024094 Caracas EL NACIONAL in Spanish 24 Feb 94 p A-6

[Report by Javier Ignacio Mayorca]

[Text] The trips reportedly made to Venezuelan territory by alleged U.S. counterspy Aldrich Ames went unnoticed by the Sectorial General Directorate of Identification and Control of Foreigners (DIEX).

Sources of the DIEX, which comes under the Interior Ministry, have told EL NACIONAL the entries of the former chief of the CIA's counterespionage Soviet Division to the country did not appear in immigration records. The visits to Venezuela attributed by REUTERS to Ames' wife Maria del Rosario Casas Ames, of Colombian origin, were not recorded either.

It should be noted the entries and departures file has computer records for the last three years. Arrivals or departures made before 1990 must be looked up manually.

International wire reports have reported Ames had been meeting with CIA personnel since 1985 in the Venezuelan capital. It is therefore presumed he entered the country with false identification.

Ames has been accused of counterspying for the Soviet Union and later for Russia. He reportedly earned $1.5 million for his efforts.

When this report was written, DIEX officials had not received the official order to determine the migratory movement of the spy or his wife.

Editor's Note: In a NEW YORK TIMES report published yesterday, it is said U.S. authorities have revealed Ames met with his contacts during two secret trips to Santa Fe de Bogota (in October of 1992) and Caracas (in November of 1993).

U.S. authorities have found cryptographic messages in the middle of papers investigated which are related to Caracas, and they said $86,700 were deposited into Ames' accounts at the Dominion Bank of Virginia and The Riggs National Bank upon his return from the Venezuelan capital.

Caracas Reports Suspension of VAT, Economic Guarantees

PA2602222094 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 2138 GMT 26 Feb 94

[Text] President Rafael Caldera today issued two decrees—which were subsequently approved by the Council of Ministers—to suspend the value-added tax [VAT] for consumers throughout the country. Central Information Office Director Guillermo Alvarez Bajares publicly announced that the presidential decree issued on 27 December 1993 was repealed, while Decree 51 temporarily suspends the economic guarantees established in Article 96 of the national Constitution.

[Begin recording] [Alvarez, in progress]...Chapter 5 of the economic rights section. Everyone may freely dedicate himself to the lucrative activity of his choice without any limitations other than those established in this Constitution and by the law for reasons of security, health, or social interest. The law will dictate norms to prevent profiteering, improper price increases, and generally abusive actions intended to obstruct or restrict economic freedoms. Obviously the previous administration could not enforce the application of the VAT, or at least with any practical consequences, because the appropriate mechanisms for proper oversight or application did not exist. Store owners who did not charge the VAT in the past few days because of the measures that had been announced, even though they were not in effect, will not be subject to any penalties.

[Unidentified reporter] Those who did not charge the tax will not be [words indistinct]?

[Alvarez] No, that will not go into effect. Store owners who did not charge customers the VAT will not be subject to sanctions.

[Reporter] What about those who charged the tax until 18 January?

[Alvarez] Those who charged the tax until the date announced will have to proceed according to the regulations on the matter. [end recording]

Chamber of Deputies, Senate To Review Banco Latino Bill

PA2602165094 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 2350 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Report by Jose Marcano from "The News" newscast]

[Text] The Chamber of Deputies approved in its first debate an emergency bill to solve the Banco Latino crisis, and the Executive Branch will possibly promulgate that legal instrument next week. The debate began at the lower chamber at 1630. The legal instrument establishes the necessary norms so people who deposited their money in the bank may recover their money.

[Begin Walter Marquez, Banco Latino Commission chairman, recording] The deputies agreed to approve the bill in the first debate. The proposed changes in style and content will be reviewed during the second debate. The president has announced that an urgent meeting will be held on Monday to complete the process for the bill's approval. Congress will be in permanent session until the bill is fully approved on Monday afternoon or evening. The Senate should review it on Tuesday, and the documents will be sent to the president on Tuesday or Wednesday for promulgation. [end recording]

The Chamber of Deputies' Finance Commission has been in permanent session since Thursday in order to prepare the respective report.

[Begin unidentified deputy recording] The bill seeks to achieve two goals: first, to regulate this specific emergency at Banco Latino and guarantee account holders will be able to recover the largest amount of money possible; second, to prevent similar situations from occurring in the future. Do you see the importance of this text? [end recording]

The Chamber of Deputies debates will possibly continue during the weekend because the Finance Commission, which is in permanent session, is expected to present a report on Friday for the second debate on Saturday. Hence, the deputies will approve the bill, thus allowing the Senate to begin its first discussion on Tuesday. The special bill for Banco Latino will probably be sanctioned by Wednesday.

Delays Possible

PA2602184594 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 2350 GMT 25 Feb 94

[From "The News" newscast]

[Text] Apparently, it will take Congress longer than expected to pass an emergency bill to resolve the Banco Latino crisis. A disagreement between the Finance Commission and the Central Bank of Venezuela was evident on Friday.

The emergency bill, after it was passed in the first debate by the Chamber of Deputies, is now in the hands of Finance Commission members. The commission has declared itself in permanent session to prepare a report that will mark the beginning of the second debate. On Friday, Betsaida Vera [not further identified] attended the Finance Commission's meeting but disagreed with some of the bill's articles. She says that if the bill is passed exactly as it was drafted, it could conflict with the General Banking Law and other financial institutions.

[Begin Vera recording] Article 4 of the bill violates the General Banking Law's stipulations on intervention because this is no longer an emergency situation. Each of the pertinent aspects must be considered. Otherwise, enforcement of the law would be troublesome because the enforcers would not be sure of what to do. And the enforcers are human. Each of them has his own opinion and will interpret the law as he understands it, as he pleases, or as he sees fit. [end recording]

The Finance Commission members met with their legal advisers to try to present a report with the consensus of all political factions, considering that the idea is to correct the ambiguities and gaps in the bill's original form.

Senator Haydee Castillo, who heads the bicameral commission that handles the Banco Latino case, also attended the Finance Commission meeting because she believes this will prompt the Senate to speed up the discussion once the proposal reaches the Senate.

[Begin Castillo recording] The Chamber of Deputies' Finance Commission is working at present and plans to meet tomorrow and on Sunday to polish off the bill for its second debate. Some of the senators, members of the commission handling the Banco Latino case, are here trying to prevent the bill, as it is released by the Chamber of Deputies, from undergoing any changes in the Senate so it can be expedited according to the Constitution and not have to be returned to the Chamber. [end recording]

Despite the differences of opinion between the Central Bank of Venezuela delegate and the members of the Chamber of Deputies' Finance Commission, the deputies will keep working so they can present, no later than next Monday, a report for the second debate of the special bill on Banco Latino. Gustavo Rossen, president of the auditing commission, and Finance Minister Julio Sosa Rodriguez have been invited to come to the Chamber on Saturday.

President Wants Quick Approval of Constitutional Reforms

PA2602141394 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 2350 GMT 22 Feb 94

[Report by Cecilia Pachano from "The News" newscast]

[Text] President Rafael Angel Caldera believes that the National Congress should approve the constitutional reforms as quickly as possible. He said that it is no secret that the constitutional reforms will not solve the country's urgent problems but will instead serve to set the guidelines for the new nation that Venezuelans can build.

The president made these statements during the presentation of a new book by COPRE [Presidential Committee for State Reform] President Ricardo Conveias entitled "A Constitution for the Future [Una Constitucion Para el Futuro]," a collection of reflections on the constitutional reform draft bill that the bicameral commission, over which Rafael Caldera himself previously presided, will present.

[Begin recording] [Caldera] At this time, with the country's need for change and a need to face up to its problems, the topic of constitutional reform is fundamental and cannot be postponed. I am convinced of the country's urgent need to carry out constitutional reforms. Parliamentary experience shows that a draft bill in the lawmaking process that is begun during a legislative period, even though it may be badly needed, generally speaking does not get approved until the following legislative period. There would be no reason to waste all that effort during the preceding period and not take advantage of the fact that with only one more debate to go in the Senate a big commission that represents all sectors and fulfills all hopes could review the bill in depth for a second debate in the Senate, for reconsideration in the Chamber of Deputies, and then submit it this year to a popular referendum.

[Conveias] It is a delicate task but one of great significance, especially taking into account the country's current situation. Congress, in assuming this huge and delicate job, will somehow reconcile itself and give the country the possibility of having a new constitution through a popular referendum. We believe a deadline should be set for this and we must all assume the sacred mission of naming a constituent assembly, which will be complemented with the favorable vote cast by the majority of voters the day of the referendum. This task is important, it is a priority, and it should not restrain congressmen from carrying out other important legislative and control tasks. [end recording]

Dr. Conveias insisted that their intention is not to impose deadlines on Congress but that congressmen should impose it on themselves so they can be in tune with the Venezuelan people's demands.

Arias Says Caldera Not Pressing for Accused Officers' Discharge

PA2602033794 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 2350 GMT 24 Feb 94

[Report by Cecilia Pachano from "The News" newscast]

[Text] Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Arias Cardenas said today at Miraflores Palace none of the accused in the 4 February and 27 November events have been pressured by the executive for their discharge.

The meeting between Arias and the president lasted more than half an hour. In an atmosphere of cordiality, Arias told President Caldera of some of his beliefs on what has happened in the country. During a lengthy news conference after the meeting, Arias told journalists of the president's receptiveness toward his proposal. He affirmed his confidence in the president's capability to lead the country. The military officer ruled out any possibility of a coup in the new political scenario in Venezuela.

[Begin Arias recording] All the proposals I made to the president were received honestly and sincerely, very openly and frankly. I informed him of the large number of officers who want only to return to the Armed Forces. Most of the officers who remain in prison have no political designs; they have no aspiration to power. They only want to serve their country, and they believe they can best do so in the Armed Forces.

I also told the president the reconciliation process is not the victory of old ways. I told him the vision I, and many others, have about this pacification and harmonization process is one of a united Armed Forces. The Armed Forces, which for a long time have been considered the country's moral reserve, have had the capacity for division so as to originate this new situation the country is beginning to experience. [sentence as heard] [end recording]

Arias expressed support for a pacification based on pardons and a concerted effort to build a dignified and honest country. He said that although for the time being he will not work to build his political career, this idea has not been totally ruled out.

MAS Deputy Ochoa Proposes Measures Against Violence

PA2502203694 Caracas EL GLOBO in Spanish 22 Feb 94 p 4

[Report by Gina Rodriguez]

[Text] Movement for Socialism [MAS] Deputy Enrique Ochoa Antich has reported that to help prevent crime, the Human Rights Committee has stressed the need to implement some urgent measures in addition to the government's personal safety program. Ochoa Antich added that the Chamber of Deputies' Domestic Policy Commission should open a dialogue with the Foreign Ministry to discuss this subject.

One of the 10 measures proposed by Ochoa Antich is to create a national office to coordinate state security agencies' intelligence services to preclude the need for mass repression operations. He also proposes to institutionalize regular meetings between the organized society and the country's security services as well as to create a special fund whereby businessmen and citizens can contribute to the hiring of new police members who will be specifically assigned to their own areas.

He also said that police villages should be built so they and their families can be protected while police are on duty. Another action would be to approve an agreement between universities and the Interior Relations Ministry whereby medical and psychology students provide periodic checkups for the police.

It would be advisable to include human rights in the soldiers and police academies curriculum and to guarantee the allocation of budgets to build new kinds of jails to help counter the pernicious self-reproducing effect of crime in traditional prisons.

Two of the most important points in the dozen proposed by Ochoa Antich deal with approving a special program to care for abandoned children and the discussion with television station owners on program violence and the possibility of stations refraining from airing programs specifically targeted for adults during daylight hours.

Because all this involves disbursement, the deputy underlined the fact that while only one or two percent of the national budget is earmarked for public security in Venezuela, up to 10 percent of the national budget is earmarked for this purpose in other countries. For this reason, he said it is necessary to reshuffle the budget.

Joint Staff Operations Director on Antinarcotics Operations

PA2502180394 Caracas EL NACIONAL in Spanish 22 Feb 94 pp D1, E1

[Report by Javier Ignacio Mayorca]

[Text] During a news conference in the presence of the 100 members of the Inter-American Defense College's [CID] Class 33 currently visiting Venezuela, Brigadier General Alvaro Rafael Barboza Rodriguez, Joint Staff operations director, reported that between 50 and 60 tons of various drugs circulate through Venezuela annually.

The CID director and U.S. Army Major General James Harding said that the students come from 14 countries on the continent. CID courses last 10 months, beginning in July. "This is an opportunity to exchange views and get to know these countries a little better. It is a very simple project," he said.

In halting Spanish, Maj. Harding said that according to data supplied by CID and the Inter-American Defense Board, which he leads also, terrorism and drug trafficking are the major threats to the continent's security. "We should strive jointly to find a solution to the drug trafficking problem, which goes beyond borders and helps the entire world. The cooperation of all governments is required," he said.

In the morning Harding paid a courtesy call to Defense Minister General Rafael Montero Revette. The CID members will fly to Colombia on Thursday.

Gen. Barboza, former commander of the Venezuela unit which operated in Honduras and Nicaragua on pacification duties, was selected by the Defense Ministry to make a general assessment of the "military situation" in Venezuela. He described as a threat the use of Venezuela as "a springboard for the traffic of drugs to Central America and their final destination, the United States." An estimate of the quantity of drugs circulating through Venezuela was made by the National Guard. "Only 10 percent of this quantity is seized. This gives an idea of the seriousness of the problem," he said. He also reported on the discovery of marijuana and coca plantations in the Perija Mountains and areas close to the Colombian border. Money laundering "has been detected essentially in four areas: Tachira; Zulia, near Maicao; Caracas, through real estate operations; and the country's eastern region," he said.

He recalled that the most successful years in the counternarcotics struggle were 1991 and 1992, when 11.981 tons and 12.681 tons, respectively, were confiscated. In 1993 the drug seizure level again was close to 3 tons, a figure similar to that of 1990. Cocaine is the most often confiscated drug. Next comes marijuana, 400 kg of which are seized annually. "The fact that heroin is entering the local market again is worrisome," he said.

The UN believes this is a worldwide problem. The number of involved countries has risen from 64 in 1990 to 138 in the first half of 1993.

Gen. Barboza announced that this year the Armed Forces will put two flight control radar sites into operation. One of them will be located in Falcon State and cover the country's central and western region. The other, located in Nueva Esparta, will serve to monitor flights between the country's central and eastern regions. These sites are being installed through agreements with U.S. counternarcotics agencies, such as DEA, CIA, and others. "These sites will be operated jointly with our Armed Forces," he said.

This illegal activity can be monitored more effectively by observing the flight patterns of the drug traffickers' planes, that is to say, speed, altitude, time, and routes, as well as the types of planes used. A special overflight program, originating in Panama and reaching Peru and Bolivia with observers aboard, is being set up. Special surveillance operations can be conducted at the request of the Venezuelan Government or the U.S. Southern Command.

Armed Forces To Conduct Joint 'Operation Maravia' Exercise

PA2602143294 Caracas EL UNIVERSAL in Spanish 24 Feb 94 pp 2-10, 2-20

[Report by Esteban Hurtado]

[Text] Punto Fijo, 23 Feb—The Venezuelan Navy and Air Force will carry out Operation Maravia in the Gulf of Venezuela. The exercise will conclude on 27 February. Rear Admiral Miguel Alvarez Diaz leads the joint Navy and Air Force exercise. Three frigates, two transports, five patrol boats, one submarine, two coast guard vessels, and two Navy planes will represent the Navy. Four squadrons each of F-16's, Mirage 50's, and VF-5's will represent the Air Force. The artillery group and the command and control center headquartered in Falcon State will represent the Air Defense Command.

According to military sources in Punto Fijo, Operation Maravia is "a war game with the participation of naval, air, and amphibious components to assess and develop sea, air, and land fighting tactics with the purpose of forming a joint task force capable of controlling the air and sea in the theater of operations, thus improving to the utmost the capability of the forces used, based on on-site training." The information underlines the military personnel's degree of training during the operation, training which results from the various situations and conditions that simulate a true situation.

In a press note, the Falcon Garrison Command reported to the people in general that planes will be overflying Paraguana Peninsula. The note concludes with an invitation to the general public of the region to visit the command units anchored at Guaranao Port on 26 and 27 February on the occasion of Punto Fijo Day.